

Hand Book of English Composition

J.M.Hart

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A HANDBOOK
OF
ENGLISH COMPOSITION

BY
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THE indications of a growing demand for more practical methods of instruction in English Composition are unmistakable. To meet this demand is the object of the present book. In pursuance of such an object I have consistently refrained from touching upon the theory of Rhetoric, or upon the relations of Rhetoric to Grammar, Logic, and Æsthētics, and have tried to state—in the plainest way possible—only those things which every educated person ought to know.

In this Preface I take the liberty of calling attention to two general features.

First, it has been my constant endeavor to make the book *interesting and stimulating*.

Second, it has been no less my endeavor to make the book *available both for school and for college*. How far I may have succeeded, must be left to the reader's judgment. I do not believe that anything here treated, possibly the chapter on Argumentation excepted, is too difficult for the boy or girl of average ability ; or, on the other hand, that any rules are here laid down which one would be tempted to discard in maturer years. After all, the doctrine which teaches from these pages is not of my invention ; it is merely the formulated *practice of the best writers*, exemplified in the illustrative extracts.

The statement of Sequence in paragraphs of Exposition and Argumentation, in §5, may appear somewhat meagre. The fault, if it be one, lies in the nature of the subject. Sequence, or Order, is a quality which cannot be formulated rigorously, much less can it be apprehended by the aid of rules. It is to be acquired only through the close study and imitation of good models. The reader is referred, therefore, to the illustrative extracts in Chapters VII. and VIII.

A suggestion of the best plan of using the book in schools may not be amiss.

I would recommend that the beginning be made with Chapters II.-IV. Here the student should be required to search for similar paragraphs in other books of general reading. Next Chapter XIII. should be mastered, and the student required to write a number of simple narrative and descriptive pieces, exemplifying both the independent paragraph and connected paragraphs. Having thus acquired some facility in expression, the student should then take up Chapters IX.-XI., and Chapter XIV., with further writing along the lines indicated in §§142-155.

This would be enough for the first year. In the second year may be taken up Chapters V.-VIII., Chapter XII., and the remainder of Chapter XV.

Lastly, in a third year, there should be a general review of Parts I.-III., with especial attention to §§152-165.

Part IV. is not offered as a substitute for the systematic study of the history of English Literature, but as a general aid to the student in his reading, whether in school

or at home. In this part I have endeavored to awaken the student to a juster appreciation of the various forms of poetry, of versification, and of oratory.

Still more obviously is the chapter upon the History of the Language intended to be stimulating rather than dogmatic. Technicalities have been avoided and the subject is presented only in its broadest and most practical aspects. From this treatment the student will, I hope, get at least a brief but attractive insight into the evolution of our English speech.

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A HANDBOOK OF ENGLISH COMPOSITION.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

INVENTION IN GENERAL.

1. THE general rules or principles of writing may be classified under the two heads of Invention and Expression.

Invention, as a rhetorical process, is the art of *putting together* what one has to say upon a subject. If the composition is at all skilful, it will make upon the reader a clearly defined impression.

Invention does not consist in finding out what to say. That is the office of life in general and of education in particular. Thus, the historian finds out what to say by studying documents and other records of the past; the botanist, by studying plants; the economist, by studying the phenomena of trade and exchange. Invention consists rather in putting our statements of fact, our observations upon men and things, our conclusions, our ideas, our feelings, into readable shape.

Since invention, in its every-day sense, implies the production of something which did not previously exist—*e. g.*

a new machine—the young writer is apt to infer that his invention also should produce something new. This is erroneous. He may offer something new, or he may not, according to the range of his knowledge and the maturity of his mind. But in either case his invention—*i. e.* the *shaping* of his thoughts—would be the same. In fact he may even, by the process called paraphrasing, re-state the writing of another in his own words and arrangement, without adding a single new thought or fact, and still be credited with invention in the rhetorical sense.

This paraphrasing, if not abused, is an extremely useful exercise—perhaps the easiest for the beginner. The teacher of any subject, after explaining the contents of a section of the book studied, may require the scholar to write down his recollections of the contents in a short paragraph, and thereby test his powers of invention. Such paragraph-writing, in substance an off-hand examination, would also be in form an exercise in composition; although it need not be the final stage of training, it might and should be the initial.

The various forms of prose writing* are classified as Narration, Description, Exposition, and Argument (with Persuasion). By this is meant that the aim of the writer is to narrate an event, or to describe an object, or to expound a general fact, or to convince the reader of the truth of a proposition.

Every one of the above forms may be exemplified in a single paragraph. The paragraph, therefore, by reason of its brevity, offers peculiar advantages for study and for practice. And since continuous writing is made up of individual paragraphs properly joined and grouped, the

* The forms of writing are not to be confounded with the forms of *literature*. These latter are endless, including poetry and the drama, fiction (the novel), history and biography, book-reviews, criticism, books of travel, political and legal treatises, philosophic and scientific treatises. Any one literary form—*e. g.* a drama, a novel, a book of travel, a history—may embody all the forms of writing in turn.

assumption is a safe and practical one, that any person trained to write a good paragraph may be readily taught to frame a longer composition. Hence the prominence given to the paragraph in this book. A few rules or suggestions for the shaping of a composition of some length are given in Chapter XIII.

CHAPTER II.

THE PARAGRAPH IN GENERAL.

2. IN learning to compose, the first step is to get a clear understanding of the paragraph—what it is and how it should be constructed.

The paragraph may be characterized as the unit of written discourse; it may be approximately defined to be a group of sentences closely connected and serving one common purpose.

According to this purpose the paragraph may be of two kinds: either the writer takes up a simple, brief, independent subject, and *disposes* of it within the limits of the paragraph, which is then called an *Isolated* or *Independent Paragraph*, or he is developing successive portions of a longer general subject in successive paragraphs; these are called *Connected* or *Related Paragraphs*.

In modern printing and writing every paragraph is marked off to the eye by the device known as indenting. In print the first letter of the paragraph is set back one *em* or two *ems* from the flush line of the column or page; in writing it is set back an inch or an inch and a half from the margin.

A paragraph is sometimes comprised within the limits of a single line and sentence. Examples of isolated paragraphs of this sort are common in the news columns of the newspapers and magazines; they are justified on purely practical grounds. Occasionally even an author who is writing upon a continuous subject will give unusual prominence to an event or a saying by throwing it

into the form of a single-sentence paragraph. Thus, Matthew Arnold, after discussing the praise bestowed by Keats and Hallam upon Chapman's translation of Homer, breaks out in the following sentence-paragraph:

I confess that I can never read twenty lines of Chapman's version without recurring to Bentley's cry: "This is not Homer!"—and that from a deeper cause than any unfaithfulness occasioned by the fetters of rhyme.—MATTHEW ARNOLD: *Translation of Homer*, p. 302.

The manner is French rather than English. It is permissible to a very moderate extent in a writer like Arnold, who is a master of writing, but it is emphatically not a manner to be held up to the young for imitation, for the young are by nature only too apt to write disjointedly, and need careful training in the art of grouping their thoughts and impressions, and giving to their composition that quality which is aptly designated as *structure*. In the present book, therefore, nearly all the quotations introduced to illustrate paragraph-writing are of some length. There are a few exceptions in Chapter III., but they are introduced merely to exemplify the quality of extreme conciseness.

A paragraph has been defined to be a group of sentences treating a subject or a definite portion of a subject (topic). Therefore the paragraph should contain only such matter as is closely connected with this subject or topic. Every sentence, every phrase, even every word, should bear upon the special purpose of the paragraph. Hence the two general rules of Unity and Sequence.

UNITY.

3. The conception of **paragraph-unity** is best learned from good concrete examples. Thus, everything in the following quotation brings into prominence the power of Paul's character and the source of that power—viz. faith in God:

The power of Paul's personality shines out in almost every line of the narrative consummated in the shipwreck. By the power of his personal presence he quiets the mob and gains an audience for himself; by the same power he checks the Roman officers as they bind him, and compels their heed to his quiet declaration that he is a Roman citizen; by the same power he secures a hearing for his nephew's revelation respecting the projected assassination; by the same power he wins his acquittal from Felix and from Festus, winning that acquittal without calling a single witness in his favor; by the same power he so affects the centurion that he is allowed to go free on his parole when the ship touches at Sidon, and secures a hearing for his counsel to harbor at Fair Haven, though overruled by the shipmaster. Never losing this hold, he it is who in the midst of the tempest stands forth, carrying cheer to sailor, soldier, and passenger, never losing presence of mind; he it is who strengthens the shipwrecked against the dangers of exhaustion in the battle with the waves by distributing to them food; and, never losing his sense of the presence of God, he bears a quiet witness to this faith by giving thanks to God, even in the midst of their fears, for their strange meal. In brief, what the story of Joseph is in the Old Testament, that is the story of Paul's voyage to Rome in the New Testament—a striking illustration of the truth and the method of Divine Providence and the power of a character whose root is faith in God.—*The Outlook*.

In the following the unity is less obvious at first reading. The passage is a mixture of narrative and description; its purpose is to awaken our sympathy with the writer at a turning-point in his life:

I shed tears as I looked round on the chair, hearth, writing-table, and other familiar objects, knowing too certainly that I looked upon them for the last time. Whilst I write this, it is nineteen years ago; and yet, at this moment, I see, as if it were but yesterday, the lineaments and expressions of the object on which I fixed my parting gaze. It was the picture of a lovely lady which hung over the mantelpiece, the eyes and mouth of which were so beautiful, and the whole countenance so radiant with divine tranquillity, that I had a thousand times laid down my pen or my book to gather consolation from it, as a devotee from his patron saint. Whilst I was yet gazing upon it, the deep tones of the old church clock proclaimed that it was six o'clock. I went up to the picture, kissed it, then gently walked out, and closed the door for ever.
—DE QUINCEY (*Confessions*), iii. 297.

The following, upon an abstruse subject, will not, perhaps, be too difficult for the young reader :

The use of a theory in the real sciences is to help the investigator to a complete view of all the hitherto discovered facts relating to the science in question ; it is a collected view, *θεωρία*, of all he yet knows in one. Of course, whilst any pertinent facts remain unknown, no theory can be exactly true, because every new fact must necessarily, to a greater or less degree, displace the relation of all the others. A theory, therefore, only helps investigation ; it cannot invent or discover. The only true theories are those of geometry, because in geometry all the premisses are true and unalterable. But to suppose that, in our present exceedingly imperfect acquaintance with the facts, any theory in chemistry or geology is altogether accurate, is absurd : it cannot be true.—S. T. COLERIDGE : *Table Talk*, ii. 198.

Observe how every clause and every word help us to understand what a theory is, according to Coleridge, and how far it may be trusted. A mathematician might object to restricting “true” theories to *geometry*.

A good specimen from Macaulay is this :

The characteristic peculiarity of his intellect was the union of great powers with low prejudices. If we judged of him by the best parts of his mind, we should place him almost as high as he was placed by the idolatry of Boswell ; if by the worst parts of his mind, we should place him even below Boswell himself. Where he was not under the influence of some strange scruple or some domineering passion which prevented him from boldly and fairly investigating a subject, he was a wary and acute reasoner, a little too much inclined to scepticism, and a little too fond of paradox. No man was less likely to be imposed upon by fallacies in argument or by exaggerated statements of fact. But if, while he was beating down sophisms and exposing false testimony, some childish prejudices, such as would excite laughter in a well-managed nursery, came across him, he was smitten as if by enchantment. His mind dwindled away under the spell from gigantic elevation to dwarfish littleness. Those who had lately been admiring its amplitude and its force were now as much astonished at its strange narrowness and feebleness as the fisherman in the Arabian tale, when he saw the genie, whose stature had overshadowed the whole sea-coast and whose might seemed equal to a contest with armies, contract himself to the dimensions of his small prison, and lie there the helpless slave of the charm of Solomon.—MACAULAY : *Boswell's Johnson*.

The ending of the paragraph is noteworthy; it is a simile which, to those who know the story of the fisherman and the bottle, illustrates most forcibly the extremes of Johnson's greatness and littleness, stated in the introductory sentence of the paragraph. Thus the end repeats the beginning, but with a picturesque variation.

4. It is characteristic of untrained writers and speakers to disregard the rule of unity. They wander from the subject, making remarks which have no bearing upon it. This wandering from the text is abundantly ridiculed by dramatists and novelists; *e. g.* Pompey the clown, wishing to tell Escalus the justice that Mrs. Elbow had come to the house, delivers himself thus:

Sir, she came in, and longing—save your honour's reverence—for stewed prunes; sir, we had but two in the house, which at that very distant time stood as it were in a fruit-dish, a dish of some threepence; your honours have seen such dishes; they are not china dishes, but very good dishes——.—*Meas. for Meas.*, ii. 1.

Escalus interrupts him with an impatient "Go to! go to! no matter for the dish, sir;" and all trained minds will echo Escalus.

Even writers of eminence occasionally mar the unity of a paragraph; *e. g.*:

Sextus Quintus was not of so generous and forgiving a temper. Upon his being made pope, the statue of Pasquin was one night dressed in a very dirty shirt, with an excuse written under it that he was forced to wear foul linen because his laundress was made a princess. This was a reflection upon the pope's sister, who, before the promotion of her brother, was in those mean circumstances that Pasquin represented her. As this pasquinade made a great noise in Rome, the pope offered a considerable sum of money to any person that should discover the author of it. The author, relying upon his Holiness's generosity, as also on some private overtures which he had received from him, made the discovery himself; upon which the pope gave him the reward he had promised, but at the same time, to disable the satirist for the future, ordered his tongue to be cut out and both his hands to be chopped off. Aretine is too trite an instance. Every one knows that all the kings in Europe were his tributaries. Nay, there is a letter of his extant, in

which he makes his boasts that he had laid the Sophy of Persia under contribution.—ADDISON (*Spectator*, 23): *Libels and Lampoons*, p. 195.

Here the last three sentences, beginning with "Aretine," are out of place. The subject of the paragraph is the cruelty of Pope Sextus Quintus. Aretine's conduct in threatening to lampoon kings and letting himself be bought off should be treated in a separate paragraph.

For an additional example of violation of unity see the extract from Addison, § 28.

SEQUENCE.

5. **Sequence** is secured by arranging the sentences of a paragraph in that order which will make the general subject of the paragraph most readily apprehended.

No general rule can be given for securing sequence. Much will depend upon the kind of writing—whether it be narration or description, exposition or argument.

In *Narration* events are usually, but not invariably, stated in the order in which they occurred (chronological). This order, apart from a digression to the present moment of writing, is observed in the passage from De Quincey, § 3; see also Stanley, § 23.

In *Description* it is usually advisable to arrest the reader's attention by putting the most conspicuous feature at the beginning of the paragraph, or at the end, or in both places. So Macaulay, § 3. In another place Macaulay is depicting the fulness of Burke's knowledge of India. He begins with the statement:

His knowledge of India was such as few, even of those Europeans who have passed many years in that country, have attained, and such as certainly was never attained by any public man who had not quitted Europe.

Then follows the explanation of this extraordinary knowledge. It was acquired through untiring industry in reading and intense imagination in illuminating masses

of fact. Then comes the middle of the paragraph, the description proper:

(1) India and its inhabitants were not to him, as to most Englishmen, mere names and abstractions, but a real country and a real people. The burning sun; the strange vegetation of the palm and the cocoa tree; the rice-field; the tank; the huge trees, older than the Mogul Empire, under which the village crowds assemble; the thatched roof of the peasant's hut; the rich tracery of the mosque where the imaum prays with his face to Mecca; the drums and banners and gaudy idols; the devotee swinging in the air; the graceful maiden, with the pitcher on her head descending the steps to the river-side; the black faces; the long beards; the yellow streaks of sect; the turbans and the flowing robes, the spears and the silver maces; the elephants with their canopies of state; the gorgeous palanquin of the prince and the close litter of the noble lady,—all these things were to him as the objects amidst which his own life had been passed, as the objects which lay on the road between Beaconsfield and St. James's Street. (2) All India was present to the eye of his mind, from the halls where suitors laid gold and perfumes at the feet of sovereigns to the wild moor where the gypsy camp was pitched; from the bazaar, humming like a beehive with the crowd of buyers and sellers, to the jungle where the lonely courier shakes his bunch of iron rings to scare away the hyenas. (3) He had just as lively an idea of the insurrection at Benares as of Lord George Gordon's riots, and of the execution of Nuncomar as of the execution of Dr. Dodd. Oppression in Bengal was to him the same thing as oppression in the streets of London.—MACAULAY: *Warren Hastings*.

Of the three sections, (1) gives a long list of picturesque details, all in one sentence; (2), shorter, is more conspicuous; it *sums up* Burke's knowledge; (3) is intentionally soberer in tone; it states the moral temper of Burke's mind, and goes back directly to the opening statement, "His knowledge," etc.

In *Exposition* and *Argumentation* the safest order is the logical. That is, premises should come before conclusions, definitions before illustrations, generals before particulars (except where the general is to be proved from the particulars by induction), a law before an instance or application. The quotation from Coleridge, § 3, is a good speci-

men of sequence. The first sentence characterizes a theory by its use; the second gives the necessary limitations of theory; the third tells what theory cannot do; the fourth designates the only true theory; the fifth applies the whole doctrine to geology. This application was Coleridge's aim from the start.

But in *Indirect Exposition* (see §§ 50, 58) it is not uncommon to put a negative before a positive; *e. g.*:

It is not the confiscation of our church property from this example in France that I dread, though I think this would be no trifling evil. The great source of my solicitude is, lest it should ever be considered in England as the policy of a state to seek a resource in confiscations of any kind, or that any one description of citizens should be brought to regard any of the others as their proper prey.—BURKE: *Reflections*, p. 172.

An effective means of securing sequence is to introduce a number of short clauses, alike in structure and about equal in weight, and to wind up with one long clause of considerable weight. Thus:

The objects of a financier are, then, to secure an ample revenue; to impose it with judgment and equality; to employ it economically; and when necessity obliges him to make use of credit, to secure its foundations in that instance, and for ever, by the clearness and candor of his proceedings, the exactness of his calculations, and the solidity of his funds.—BURKE: *Reflections*, p. 257.

SELECTION, PROPORTION, VARIETY.

6. Some authorities upon the paragraph have mentioned additional features—viz.: Selection, Proportion, Variety.

By **Selection** is meant that the writer introduces into the paragraph only those items which are most important and most available. But no principle can be laid down for guiding us in our choice. Every writer must, on the one hand, acquire for himself the good taste to perceive that he has said enough and said his best; on the other, he must train his thinking faculties to judge that what he writes is essential to the purpose and is arranged in proper

order. The young cannot learn too soon that *all good writing is merely the accurate expression of careful thinking.*

By **Proportion** is meant that each item in the paragraph gets that share of space and that prominence which it deserves. Here again no rule can be given. Every paragraph is to be considered as a law unto itself. But a close observance of the principles of Sequence will scarcely fail to ensure Proportion.

By **Variety** is meant that the writer does not make his sentences all long, or all short; does not employ the same words or the same sentence-structure too frequently; does not construct his paragraphs too much alike. Here again taste and judgment will be more helpful than any rules. Also, one must study the methods of the best masters. Thus: *See Memoirs p. 11.*

(1) So, then, Oxford Street, stony-hearted stepmother, thou that listenest to the sighs of orphans and drinkest the tears of children, at length I was dismissed from thee! The time was come that I no more should pace in anguish thy never-ending terraces, no more should wake and dream in captivity to the pangs of hunger. Successors too many to myself and Ann have, doubtless, since then trodden in our footsteps, inheritors of our calamities. Other orphans than Ann have sighed; tears have been shed by other children; and thou, Oxford Street, hast since those days echoed to the groans of innumerable hearts. (2) For myself, however, the storm which I had outlived seemed to have been the pledge of a long fair weather; the premature sufferings which I had paid down, to have been accepted as a ransom for many years to come, as a price of long immunity from sorrow; and if again I walked in London, a solitary and contemplative man (as oftentimes I did), I walked for the most part in serenity and peace of mind. (3) And, although it is true that the calamities of my novitiate in London had struck root so deeply in my bodily constitution that afterwards they shot up and flourished afresh, and grew into a noxious umbrage that has overshadowed and darkened my latter years, yet these second assaults of suffering were met with a fortitude more confirmed, with the resources of a maturer intellect, and with alleviations, how deep! from sympathising affection.—DE QUINCEY (*Confessions*), iii. 375.

In the above there is every element of variety. In (1)

the clauses are crisp and nervous; in (2), longer and more reflective; (3) is all one long sentence, one profound reflection. Such concrete phrases as "sighs of orphans," "tears of children," "pangs of hunger," are replaced in (2) by the vaguer general phrase "premature sufferings." "Pace in anguish" (1) is contrasted with "walked in serenity and peace of mind" (2). There is also a marked linguistic contrast between "stony-hearted," "never-ending" (1) and "noxious umbrage," "alleviations from sympathising affection" (3).

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

7. It has been stated that no general rule can be given for securing sequence. But the following suggestions will be of help to the young writer:

1. Study carefully the sequence in the paragraphs of the best prose authors. Of the authors usually read in school, the best in this respect are Hawthorne, Irving, and Macaulay. De Quincey is scarcely an author for the school; he is extremely painstaking in his paragraph-structure when writing seriously, but in his humorous passages is apt to bring in irrelevant matter, and thereby mar both sequence and unity. Webster's paragraphs are well constructed. So are Addison's, with an occasional slip. Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot are less careful.

2. Having read a paragraph through, write down, in a short clause, what you judge to be its leading subject. Then write down, in still shorter clauses, the items which make up the body of the paragraph. This will lay bare the mechanism of the paragraph—its "skeleton."

3. Before composing a paragraph of your own, prepare a skeleton in like manner. That is, write down the subject (what you purpose treating in the paragraph) and the several items, and arrange and rearrange the items until you are satisfied that you have hit upon the best order. See § 122.

8. The Echo.—Make the sentences of the paragraph fit into each other by letting the beginning clause of one sentence *echo* the thought, and perhaps even the wording, of the last clause of the sentence immediately preceding. This echo device is extremely effective; it has been employed, consciously or unconsciously, by many of the best writers. Thus:

Just as I was pulling on my boots the nine o'clock bell rang. "There!" I cried, "that serves me right for lying abed."

Observe how direct and obvious the connection between the ejaculation "There!" and the "rang," and how the connection would be broken by a different arrangement, as:

The nine o'clock bell rang just as I was pulling on my boots. "There!" I said, "that serves me right for lying in bed!" *

Observe the echo in the following quotations, in which the echoing words have been italicized for the purpose:

I was roused from this fit of luxurious meditation by a shout from my little travelling *companions*. *They* had been looking out of the coach-windows for the last few miles, recognizing every tree and cottage as they approached home, and now there was a general *burst of joy*. "*There's John!* and *there's old Carlo!* and *there's Bantam!*" cried the happy little rogues, clapping their hands.—IRVING: *The Stage-Coach*.

Accordingly, with such a tramp of his ponderous riding-boots as might of itself have been audible in the remotest of the seven gables, he [the lieutenant-governor] advanced to the door, which the servant pointed out, and made its new panels re-echo with a loud, free *knock*. *Then*, looking round with a smile to the spectators, he awaited a *response*. As *none* came, however, he knocked again, but with the same unsatisfactory results *as at first*. And now, being a trifle choleric in his temperament, the lieutenant-governor uplifted the heavy hilt of the sword, wherewith he so beat and banged upon the door that, etc.—HAWTHORNE: *Seven Gables*, ch. i.

In the following:

In this place then I resolved to fix my design, and accordingly I prepared *two muskets* and my ordinary fowling-piece. The *two muskets I*

* This example is taken from A. S. Hill, *Foundations of Rhetoric*, p. 306, where the matter is fully treated.

loaded with a brace of slugs each, and four or five smaller bullets, about the size of pistol-bullets; and the fowling-piece I loaded with near a handful of swan-shot of the largest size, etc.—DE FOE: *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 200.

the connection is more evident than if the author had written: "I loaded the two muskets."

The following is an apt illustration of echo-sequence in a more complicated structure:

History will record that on the morning of the 6th of October, 1789, the king and queen of France, after a day of confusion, alarm, dismay, and slaughter, lay down, under the pledged security of public faith, to indulge nature in a few hours of respite and troubled *melancholy repose*. *From this sleep* the queen was first startled by the voice of the sentinel at her door, who cried out to her to save herself by flight—that this was the last proof of fidelity he could give—that they were upon him, and he was dead. Instantly he was *cut down*. A *band of cruel ruffians* and assassins, reeking with his blood, rushed into the chamber of the queen, etc.—BURKE: *Reflections*, p. 78.

We are to understand that the sentinel was cut down *by* the band of ruffians.

In the following passage the sequence is marred by the introduction of a contrast for which there has been no preparation:

Nor must we forget that all, or almost all, to whom, when placed at the head of affairs, he could apply for assistance, were persons who owed as little as himself, or less than himself, to education. *A minister in Europe* finds himself, on the first day on which he commences his functions, surrounded by experienced public servants, the depositaries of official traditions. Hastings had no such help. His own reflection, his own energy, were to supply the place of all Downing Street and Somerset House.—MACAULAY: *Warren Hastings*.

While reading of Hastings in *India* we pass all at once to a minister in *Europe*, and we are naturally startled. The transition would have been made much easier by a slight change: "Unlike a minister in Europe, who finds himself . . . traditions, Hastings had no one to counsel him. His own," etc.

9. Connectives.—Study the force of and learn to use connectives—*i. e.* certain words and short phrases which indicate the transition from one thought to the next, or which justify, enforce, restrict, or otherwise modify an assertion. The value of connectives has been aptly stated :

A close reasoner and a good writer in general may be known by his pertinent use of connectives. Read that page of Johnson : you cannot alter one conjunction without spoiling the sense. It is a linked strain throughout. In your modern books, for the most part, the sentences in a page have the same connection with each other that marbles have in a bag : they touch without adhering.—S. T. COLERIDGE : *Table Talk*, ii. 185.

Note, in the following, how clearness is enhanced by the italicized words :

Even the critics, whatever may be said of them by others, he [the present author, Irving] has found to be a singularly gentle and good-natured race ; *it is true* that each has in turn objected to some one or two articles, and that these individual exceptions, taken in the aggregate, would amount almost to a total condemnation of his work ; *but then* he has been consoled by observing, that what one has particularly censured, another has as particularly praised ; *and thus*, the encomiums being set off against the objections, he finds his work *upon the whole* commended far beyond its deserts.—IRVING : *L'Envoy*.

In the following :

The two principles of conservation and correction operated strongly at the two critical periods of the Restoration and Revolution, when England found itself without a king. At both those periods the nation had lost the bond of union in their ancient edifice ; they did not, *however*, dissolve the whole fabric. *On the contrary*, in both cases they regenerated the deficient part of the old constitution through the parts which were not impaired. They kept these old parts exactly as they were, that the part recovered might be suited to them.—BURKE : *Reflections*, p. 23.

not only is the general sequence close, but the whole paragraph may be said to turn upon the words italicized.

The young writer should note the use of these words and phrases in good writers, and of similar expressions—*e. g.* “notwithstanding,” “after all,” “all in all,” “like-

wise," "further," "consequently," etc.—and should endeavor to employ them in his own writing.

¶ 10. Repeated Structure.—This is an effective device of certain writers who have paid especial attention to form. Its use, if not excessive, gives to the thought-sequence a peculiar power and dignity as well as clearness. But, like the single-sentence paragraph, § 2, it is not without danger for the young. An example of repetition is:

Of books, so long as you rest only on grounds which, in sincerity, you believe to be true, and speak without anger or scorn, you can hardly say the thing which ought to be taken amiss. But of men and women you dare not, and must not, tell all that chance may have revealed to you. *Sometimes* you are summoned to silence by pity for that general human infirmity which you also, the writer, share. *Sometimes* you are checked by the consideration that perhaps your knowledge of the case was originally gained under opportunities allowed only by confidence or by unsuspecting carelessness. *Sometimes* the disclosure would cause quarrels between parties now at peace. *Sometimes* it would inflict pain, such as you could not feel any right to inflict, upon people not directly but collaterally interested in the exposure. *Sometimes*, again, if right to be told, it might be difficult to prove. *Thus, for one cause and another*, some things are sacred and some things are perilous amongst any personal relations that else you might have it in your power to make.—DE QUINCEY (*On Wordsworth's Poetry*), xi. 294.

See also the first passage from Burke, § 13; De Quincey (*from, as from*), § 31; and *The Outlook* (*By the power*), § 3.

Simpler, and therefore safer for the young to imitate, is the following:

On this sacred day [Sunday] the gigantic monster [London] is charmed into repose. *The* intolerable din and struggle of the week are at an end. *The* shops are shut. *The* fires of forges and manufactories are extinguished, and *the* sun, no longer obscured by murky clouds of smoke, pours down a sober yellow radiance into the quiet streets. *The* few pedestrians we meet, instead of hurrying forward with anxious countenances, move leisurely along; *their* brows are smoothed from the wrinkles of business and care; *they* have put on *their* Sunday looks and Sunday manners with *their* Sunday clothes, and are cleansed in mind as well as in person.—IRVING: *A Sunday in London*.

Note, in the above, the repetition of "the;" also its giving way to "they" and "their," and the repetition of "Sunday."

11. The Subject-Sentence, or Topic-Sentence.—In § 7, No. 3, the writer is advised to prepare a skeleton of the paragraph, consisting of the subject and the several items. But this skeleton is merely for his private guidance. In actual composition he is called upon to *make the subject, or some aspect of the subject, conspicuous in the paragraph*. That is, he should express this subject, or this aspect, in a sentence or a phrase which stands out from the rest of the paragraph and arrests the reader's attention.

Such a sentence or phrase may be called the Subject-Sentence; by some it is called the Topic-Sentence. A few examples from prominent writers will show how common and effective the device is. Note the italicized sentences. Thus:

Faith in God, faith in man, faith in work,—this is the short formula in which we may sum up the teaching of the founders of New England—a creed ample enough for this life and the next. If their municipal regulations smack somewhat of Judaism, yet there can be no nobler aim or more practical wisdom than theirs, for it was to make the law of man a living counterpart of the law of God, in their highest conception of it. Were they too earnest in the strife to save their souls alive? *That is still the problem which every wise and brave man is lifelong in solving.* If the Devil take a less hateful shape to us than to our fathers, he is as busy with us as with them; and if we cannot find it in our hearts to break with a gentleman of so much worldly wisdom, who gives such admirable dinners, and whose manners are so perfect, so much the worse for us.—LOWELL: *New England*, p. 229.

Boswell has already been much commented upon, but rather in the way of censure and vituperation than of true recognition. He was a man that brought himself much before the world; confessed that he eagerly coveted fame, or, if that were not possible, notoriety; of which latter, as he gained far more than seemed his due, the public were incited, not only by their natural love of scandal, but by a special ground of envy, to say whatever ill of him could be said. Out of the fifteen millions that then lived and had bed and board in the British Islands,

this man has provided us a greater pleasure than any other individual at whose cost we now enjoy ourselves; perhaps has done us a greater service than can be specially attributed to more than two or three: yet, ungrateful that we are, no written or spoken eulogy of James Boswell anywhere exists; his recompense in solid pudding (so far as copyright went) was not excessive; and as for the empty praise, it has altogether been denied him. *Men are unwiser than children; they do not know the hand that feeds them.*—CARLYLE: *Boswell's Johnson*.

Carlyle's leading thought is English ingratitude to Boswell, but the full force is felt only at the end. The reader should bear in mind that satire is usually like a wasp: the sting is in the tail.

The following is not satire, but simple explanation:

Had the colonel survived only a few weeks longer, it is probable that his great political influence and powerful connections at home and abroad would have consummated all that was necessary to render the claim [to vast possessions in Maine] available. But, in spite of good Mr. Higginson's congratulatory eloquence, this appeared to be the one thing which Colonel Pyncheon, provident and sagacious as he was, had allowed to go at loose ends. So far as the prospective territory was concerned, he unquestionably died too soon. His son lacked not merely the father's eminent position, but the talent and force of character to achieve it: he could therefore effect nothing by dint of political interest; and the bare justice or legality of the claim was not so apparent after the colonel's decease as it had been pronounced in his lifetime. *Some connecting link had slipped out of the evidence*, and could not anywhere be found.—HAWTHORNE: *Seven Gables*, ch. i.

yet the explanation is not suggested until the end; whereas in the following the key-note is struck in the opening sentence:

In this republican country, amid the fluctuating waves of our social life, *somebody is always at the drowning-point*. The tragedy is enacted with as continual a repetition as that of a popular drama on a holiday; and, nevertheless, is felt as deeply, perhaps, as when an hereditary noble sinks below his order. More deeply, since with us rank is the grosser substance of wealth and a splendid establishment, and has no spiritual existence after the death of these, but dies hopelessly along with them. And therefore, since we have been unfortunate enough to introduce our heroine at so inauspicious a juncture, we would entreat for a mood of

due solemnity in the spectators of her fate.—HAWTHORNE: *Seven Gables*, ch. ii.

12. The use, the form, and the position of the subject-sentence depend in great measure upon the form of composition.

In **Narration** and in **Description** (see Chapters V. and VI.) it is usually impossible to introduce a *genuine* subject-sentence, for the reason that a narrative or a description usually consists of a number of independent facts—physical objects or movements—which cannot be summed up in a single statement. Yet even here the writer may select one object, one feature, one movement, and make it the centre of interest. Thus:

At the end of a lane there was an old, sober-looking servant in livery, waiting for them; he was accompanied by a superannuated pointer and by the redoubtable Bantam, a little old rat of a pony, with a shaggy mane and long, rusty tail, who stood dozing quietly by the roadside, little dreaming of the bustling times that awaited him.

Of the three figures, it would be easy to guess that the pony is the most important, even were we not to read the following paragraph:

I was pleased to see the fondness with which the little fellows leaped about the steady old footman and hugged the pointer, who wriggled his whole body for joy. But Bantam was the great object of interest; all wanted to mount at once, and it was with some difficulty that John arranged that they should ride by turns, and the eldest should ride first.—IRVING: *The Stage-Coach*.

In the description of Master Simon:

He was a tight, brisk little man, with the air of an arrant old bachelor. His nose was shaped like the bill of a parrot; his face slightly pitted with the small-pox, with a dry perpetual bloom on it, like a frost-bitten leaf in autumn. He had an eye of great quickness and vivacity, with a drollery and lurking waggery of expression that was irresistible. *He was evidently the wit of the family*, dealing very much in sly jokes and innuendoes with the ladies, and making infinite merriment by harping upon old themes, which, unfortunately, my ignorance of the family chronicles did not permit me to enjoy. It seemed to be his

great delight during supper to keep a young girl next him in a continual agony of stifled laughter, in spite of her awe of the reproving looks of her mother, who sat opposite. *Indeed, he was the idol of the younger part of the company, who laughed at everything he said or did and at every turn of his countenance; I could not wonder at it, for he must have been a miracle of accomplishments in their eyes. He could imitate Punch and Judy; make an old woman of his hand, with the assistance of a burnt cork and pocket-handkerchief; and cut an orange into such a ludicrous caricature that the young folks were ready to die with laughing.*—IRVING: *Christmas Eve*.

the clauses here italicized are paragraph-centres. They differ from the rest in structure; also, each states a *general* fact.

In the following:

It was the very witching time of night that Ichabod, heavy-hearted and crestfallen, pursued his travel homewards along the sides of the lofty hills which rise above Tarry Town, and which he had traversed so cheerily in the afternoon. *The hour was as dismal as himself.* Far below him, the Tappan Zee spread its dusky and indistinct waste of waters, with here and there the tall mast of a sloop riding quietly at anchor under the land. In the dead hush of midnight he could even hear the barking of the watch-dog, etc.—IRVING: *Sleepy Hollow*.

the sentence here italicized expresses the sentiment of the situation.

In the description of the burning of Canonchet's fort:

The victors set fire to the wigwams and the fort; the whole was soon in a blaze; many of the old men, the women, and the children perished in the flames. *This last outrage overcame even the stoicism of the savage.* The neighboring woods resounded with the yells of rage and despair, uttered by the fugitive warriors, as they beheld the destruction of their dwellings, and heard the agonizing cries of their wives and offspring, etc.—IRVING: *Philip of Pokanoket*.

the sentence here italicized is conspicuous by introducing the moral element into a scene of horror.

Note, on the other hand, the passage from Macaulay, § 3, where the subject-sentence is put boldly at the beginning. Examine also the paragraphs quoted in the chapters on Narration and Description, and in your own writing

do not fail to make some one feature of the object described, some one incident of the event narrated, stand out conspicuous in the paragraph.

13. Exposition.—From the very nature of this form of writing (see Chapter VII.), it follows that every paragraph should have a topic-sentence. For, since exposition is at bottom explanation—*i. e.* making the difficult more intelligible—the writer must at least state precisely *what* he is trying to explain.

Usually the topic-sentence is placed at or near the beginning of the paragraph. But exceptions are not infrequent. Thus, in the following humorous explanation of Ichabod's perplexity :

All these [ghost stories], however, were mere terrors of the night, phantoms of the mind that walk in darkness; and though he had seen many spectres in his time, and been more than once beset by Satan in divers shapes in his lonely perambulations, yet daylight put an end to all these evils; and he would have passed a pleasant life of it, in despite of the devil and all his works, if his path had not been crossed by a being that causes more perplexity to mortal man than ghosts, goblins, and the whole race of witches put together, *and that was—a woman.*—
IRVING: *Sleepy Hollow.*

Irving makes his jest (see remarks on the passage from Carlyle, § 11) effective by introducing the cause at the very last. Woman is a general source of trouble, as Irving jestingly puts it. Moreover, the passage is not pure exposition, but borders on description. In the following extract, a perfectly sober passage :

In discussing the savage character, writers have been too prone to indulge in vulgar prejudices and passionate exaggeration, instead of the candid temper of true philosophy. They have not sufficiently considered the peculiar circumstances in which the Indians have been placed, and the peculiar principles under which they have been educated. *No being acts more rigidly from rule than the Indian.* His whole conduct is regulated according to some general maxims early implanted in his mind. The moral laws that govern him are, to be sure, but few, but then he conforms to them all; the white man abounds in laws of re-

ligion, morals, and manners, but how many does he violate?—IRVING: *Traits of Indian Character.*

the general principle, upon which everything turns, is in the italicized sentence at the middle. In still another paragraph:

But if courage intrinsically consists in the defiance of danger and pain, *the life of the Indian is a continual exhibition of it.* He lives in a state of perpetual hostility and risk. Peril and adventure are congenial to his nature; or rather seem necessary to arouse his faculties and to give an interest to his existence. Surrounded by hostile tribes, whose mode of warfare is by ambush and surprisal, he is always prepared for fight, and lives with his weapons in his hand, etc.—IRVING: *Traits of Indian Character.*

the subject-sentence is at the beginning.

Usually a general principle is stated before the application to individual cases; a rule is given before the exceptions; a positive assertion before the negative converse. But examples of the opposite arrangement are to be found in good writers.

Before composing an expository paragraph, *settle clearly in your mind the leading thought or view that you wish to advance, and make it conspicuous somewhere in the paragraph.* If, after the paragraph is written, this thought does not seem conspicuous enough, reconstruct the whole.

See § 122; study also the extracts in Chapter VII.

Argumentation.—As stated in Chapter VIII., the object of an argument is to prove or disprove a definite assertion, called a proposition. This proposition, accordingly, is the essence of the paragraph, and is itself the subject-sentence. It must be stated, therefore, clearly, concisely, and conspicuously.

In very exact reasoning—*e. g.* in mathematics and physical science—the proposition may be placed at the beginning, or at the end, or in both places. In geometry the usual place is at the beginning.

In argumentative writing that is less rigorous in its

method and less accurate in its results, the true place for the proposition is at the end—*i. e.* as a conclusion. But a very careful writer will frequently state, or at least indicate, it at the beginning also, in order to prepare the reader's mind in advance.

In the following passage Burke is contending that the disestablishment of the Church and the confiscation of its property [French Revolution of 1789] was tyrannical. The direct assertion, however, is not made until the very close:

When men are encouraged to go into a certain mode of life by the existing laws, and protected in that mode as in a lawful occupation—when they have accommodated all their ideas and all their habits to it—when the law had long made their adherence to its rules a ground of reputation, and their departure from them a ground of disgrace and even of penalty,—I am sure it is unjust in legislature, by an arbitrary act, to offer a sudden violence to their minds and their feelings; forcibly to degrade them from their state and condition, and to stigmatize with shame and infamy that character and those customs which before had been made the measure of their happiness and honour. If to this be added an expulsion from their habitations and a confiscation of all their goods, I am not sagacious enough to discover how this despotic sport made of the feelings, consciences, prejudices, and properties of men can be discriminated from the rankest tyranny.—BURKE: *Reflections*, p. 175.

It comes as a quasi-induction from a number of painful details. In another passage, comprising several paragraphs in succession, Burke demonstrates that the English constitution was not established, and cannot be maintained, in disregard of the past. In the first paragraph he shows that the oldest English constitutional document, Magna Charta, has always been considered to be the embodiment of still more ancient rights. In the second he quotes from the Petition of Right addressed by Parliament to Charles I.: "Your subjects have *inherited* this freedom"—preferring, evidently, a positive, recorded, hereditary title to any vague speculative right. In the third he quotes from the Declaration of Right under William and Mary, in which

Parliament prays the king and queen "that it be declared and enacted that all and singular the rights and liberties asserted and declared are the true *ancient* and indubitable rights and liberties of the people of this kingdom." The fourth paragraph is here given entire :

You will observe that, from Magna Charta to the Declaration of Right, it has been the uniform policy of our constitution to *claim and assert our liberties as an entailed inheritance* derived to us from our forefathers, and to be transmitted to our posterity ; as an estate specially belonging to the people of this kingdom, without any reference whatever to any other more general or prior right. By this means our constitution preserves an unity in so great a diversity of its parts. We have an inheritable crown, an inheritable peerage, and an house of commons and a people inheriting privileges, franchises, and liberties *from a long line of ancestors*.—BURKE: *Reflections*, p. 36.

The doctrine of inheritance runs through it all, appearing in every sentence. But the doctrine is formulated at the outset, in the clause, "claim and assert our liberties as an entailed inheritance," and is repeated in the final clause, "from a long line of ancestors."

For further examples see Chapter VIII. This kind of writing is extremely difficult, as is there stated. Nevertheless, the young student may profit greatly from examining argumentative paragraphs in the best authors, and analyzing each one into proposition, proof, and illustration.

CHAPTER III.

THE INDEPENDENT OR ISOLATED PARAGRAPH.

14. THIS form of stating one's views or knowledge is comparatively modern. In our day its use is growing rapidly in the daily and weekly newspapers and the monthly magazines. Not only the news-columns, but even the editorial pages, abound in isolated paragraphs, varying in length from two or three lines to thirty or forty, and touching upon every conceivable subject. A few examples will suffice. The first paragraph is one that gained a prize for saying the most upon the subject in two hundred words:

I feel repaid for the expense of my trip to the World's Fair because strengthened in seven ways. 1. *Spiritually*. I know as never before that we, the people of this world, are brothers, and all need the gospel; that missionaries should be sent to every land. 2. *Mentally*. This Fair has caused me to think more intelligently. Before attending the Fair I studied faithfully, to be able to use my time wisely. Since reaching home I have been doubly interested not only in news concerning the Fair, but in the general news and history of all nations. 3. *Physically*. For several years I had not had one day of freedom from the care of my little ones. That week's outing gave me a complete rest and change. 4. *Socially*. I have more to talk about, and need not spend time discussing my neighbors' failings. 5. *In manners*. With few social advantages, I find the travelling and staying at large hotels have been advantages to me. 6. *In refinement*. The pictures, lectures, concerts, all had a refining influence. 7. *In the nursery*. I got many ideas in the care and training of children.—*The Golden Rule*, Dec. 28, 1893.

An exhibition of exceeding interest has just been opened at the Vienna Museum. This consists of a collection of upwards of 10,000 Egyptian papyrus documents, which were discovered at El Fayûm, and purchased by the Austrian Archduke Rainer several years ago. The

collection is unique, and the documents, which are written in eleven different languages, have all been deciphered and arranged scientifically. They cover a period of 2500 years and furnish remarkable evidence as to the culture and public and private life of the ancient Egyptians and other nations. They are also said to contain evidence that printing from type was known to the Egyptians as far back as the tenth century B. C. Other documents show that a flourishing trade in the manufacture of paper from linen rags existed six centuries before the process was known in Europe. Another interesting feature in the collection is a number of commercial letters, contracts, tax-records, wills, novels, tailors' bills, and even love-letters, dating from 1200 B. C.—*N. Y. Evening Post*.

We may soon expect to see our maidens working mythological characters, and illustrating fables and legends on our bedspreads, with descriptive lines by some of our poets. At least they will do so if they follow English precedent. The idea of a bedspread with a good and appropriate poem embroidered on it is rather a pleasing one, and would, I think, be far more interesting on a cold morning, when one hesitates about rising, or when one is a little ill, than impossible flowers, or a quilt of many colors that puts out the eyes by its brilliance. At the London Society of Arts and Crafts there was lately shown a linen bedspread worked in wools, on which were embroidered verses by the poet William Morris. The work was done by his daughter, a most talented young woman, who is of great assistance to her father in the invention and execution of beautiful things for English households.—*N. Y. Evening Post*.

From a mixture having the proportions of about one quart of crude petroleum to two ounces of resin, five ounces of powdered soap, and eleven ounces of caustic soda, Engineer Maestracci of the Italian navy produces fuel bricks that he recommends for vessels as being less bulky than coal and safer than liquid fuel. The materials are heated until converted into a thick paste, poured into moulds, and placed for a few minutes in a drying oven. The addition of 20 per cent. of wood sawdust and 20 per cent. of clay is advised as a means of making the briquettes cheaper and more solid. Tried on tugboats, the petroleum briquettes furnished about three times as much heat as coal briquettes, and gave out very little smoke and left little or no ash.

15. Peculiar Conciseness of the Independent Paragraph.—Inasmuch as the independent paragraph is an attempt to dispose of a subject in a few lines, it must be

extremely concise. This conciseness can be secured only by observing with the *utmost rigor* the rules of unity and sequence. The writer must advance rapidly from point to point, without the slightest deviation from the main purpose. He must perceive with perfect clearness what he has to say, and must say it with exactness. The following quotations will show what can be done within very narrow limits:

A mouse saw his shadow on the wall. Said he, "I am larger than an elephant; I will go forth and conquer the world." At that moment he espied a cat. In the next he had slipped through a hole in the wall.—BERRY BENSON: *Century Mag.*, January, 1894.

Land was the only species of property which, in the old time, carried any respectability with it. Money alone, apart from some tenure of land, not only did not make the possessor great and respectable, but actually made him at once the object of plunder and hatred. Witness the history of the Jews in this country in the early reigns after the Conquest.—S. T. COLERIDGE: *Table Talk*, ii. 154.

Friends as we are, have long been, and ever shall be, I doubt whether I should have prefaced these pages with your name were it not to register my judgment that, in breaking up and cultivating the unreclaimed wastes of Humanity, no labors have been so strenuous, so continuous, or half so successful, as yours. While the world admires in you an unlimited knowledge of mankind, deep thought, vivid imagination, and bursts of eloquence from unclouded heights, no less am I delighted when I see you at the school-room you have liberated from cruelty, and at the cottage you have purified from disease.—LANDOR: *Dedication to Dickens*, p. 340.

These are all excellent, each in its own line. But the following, from Goldsmith, is faulty:

There are an hundred faults in this thing, and an hundred things might be said to prove them beauties. But it is needless. A book may be amusing with numerous errors, or it may be very dull without a single absurdity. The hero of this piece unites in himself the three greatest characters upon earth: he is a priest, an husbandman, and the father of a family. He is drawn as ready to teach, and ready to obey; as simple in affluence, and majestic in adversity. In this age of opulence and refinement, whom can such a character please? Such as are

fond of high life will turn with disdain from the simplicity of his country fireside; such as mistake ribaldry for humour will find no wit in his harmless conversation; and such as have been taught to deride religion will laugh at one whose chief stores of comfort are drawn from futurity.—GOLDSMITH: *Advertisement to Vicar of Wakefield*.

The above lacks unity. Goldsmith sets out, apparently, with the hope that his book may prove to be good and acceptable in spite of its defects. Then he gives an abstract of the character of the Vicar, and ends with the intimation that such a character cannot possibly find favor with a flippant and irreligious public. The hope and the doubt do not harmonize.

16. The Independent Paragraph in School Work.—The usefulness of practice in paragraph-writing for school (and also college) work can scarcely be over-estimated. This usefulness is not restricted to the English room proper, but, on the contrary, extends to all departments and subjects. Every written answer to an examination question, whether in geography, history, science, or literature, is an independent paragraph. Since, as all examiners know, a large percentage of time and energy is wasted upon examination-papers in the mere effort to puzzle out what the writers really meant to say, and since this waste might be avoided were the writers carefully trained to observe unity and sequence, it follows that the question of correct paragraphing is one which interests every teacher. In fact, it may be asked whether every teacher should not teach his own pupils to write paragraphs upon subjects in his line of study, and thereby co-operate in making the whole curriculum a drill in correct and rapid composition. In subjects other than English the paragraphs would usually be of an expository nature, although opportunities for narration and description would be frequent enough, *e. g.*, in history and geography.

In the English room proper the paragraph is the most available means of specific training in the details of Eng-

lish composition. Being short, it can be written in twenty to thirty minutes. Therefore it may be required very frequently, almost daily. And since every paragraph embodies most of the features of Invention and Expression, every paragraph gives an opportunity for correcting what may be called the writer's *chronic* faults. Compared with the paragraph, the essay or old-fashioned composition is at a disadvantage. It must be written at intervals or piecemeal, can be required less frequently, and yet offers no greater opportunity for correction. That is, although a composition may contain three or four times as many errors, in the aggregate, as a short paragraph, it will not contain more *kinds* of error than a short paragraph by the same writer. Furthermore, the fact that the paragraph is written in the school-room, under the eye of the teacher, is a guarantee of honest work, whereas it is almost impossible to have an equivalent guarantee in the case of compositions written outside the school-room. One can never be quite certain that the writer may not have received improper aid.

There is a growing belief that the school instruction of the future in English will lie in the direction of the paragraph. This belief rests upon two grounds: first, that the essentials of composition can be learned through the paragraph, and that the paragraph can be required in sufficient quantity under any school-system; second, that the pupil who has been carefully trained to express himself in paragraphs, even should he be carried no farther in school, will have little difficulty in subsequently mastering the art of building up an essay from the paragraph, especially if he has been trained to study paragraphs in groups—a matter which is treated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

CONNECTED OR RELATED PARAGRAPHS.

PARAGRAPHS standing in combination as parts of a comprehensive whole (essay or composition) are influenced by certain principles which do not obtain when the paragraph is independent.

17. Paragraph-Echo.—This resembles the sentence-echo discussed in § 8. It consists in making the beginning sentence of the paragraph echo the thought, and sometimes even the wording, of the conclusion of the preceding paragraph; *e. g.* De Quincey, narrating his running away from school and his efforts to meet his sister, who was to act as peacemaker between him and the mother, ends one paragraph and begins the next thus:

. . . Not one minute had I waited, when in glided among the ruins—not my fair sister, but my bronzed *Bengal uncle!*

A *Bengal tiger* would not more have startled me. Now, to a dead certainty, I said, here comes a fatal barrier to the prosecution of my scheme, etc.—DE QUINCEY (*Confessions*), iii. 312.

The following is from Swift. The emperor of Lilliput has sent an envoy to Blefuscu to demand the return of Gulliver. The answer of the emperor of Blefuscu is given in a second paragraph. The third begins thus:

With this answer the envoy returned to Lilliput, etc.—SWIFT: *Gulliver* (*Lilliput*, ch. viii.).

The connection would have been less direct had Swift written: “The envoy returned with this answer,” etc.

The following is from Hawthorne. Hepzibah Pyncheon is expecting the return of her brother Clifford, but not so soon. The first paragraph runs:

During the latter process an omnibus came to a standstill under the branches of the elm tree. Hepzibah's heart was in her mouth. Remote and dusky . . . was that region of the Past whence her only guest might be expected to arrive. *Was she to meet him now?*

The next begins :

Somebody, at all events, was passing from the furthest interior of the omnibus towards its entrance. A gentleman alighted ; but it was only to offer his hand to a *young girl* whose slender figure lightly descended the steps . . . towards the House of the Seven Gables, etc.—HAWTHORNE: *Seven Gables*, ch. iv.

In the above the combination of paragraph-echo with the actual shock of surprise to Hepzibah is admirable.

Occasionally we find even what may be called chapter-echo. Thus ch. ii. of Hawthorne's *Marble Faun* ends: " 'Miriam,' whispered Hilda, . . . 'it is your model.' " Ch. iii. begins: "Miriam's model has so important a connection," etc. This is the more remarkable since ch. iii. is a Reverting Narrative, see § 26; it begins the story some months earlier than the events of chs. i. and ii.

18. Link-Paragraph.—This is a paragraph, usually a short one, the purpose of which is to mark a stage in the progress of the discourse.

Sometimes the link-paragraph gives weight and solemnity to a thought when first introduced, and suggests its significance for the future; *e. g.* Hawthorne, after narrating at length the festivities for opening the House of the Seven Gables, just built, and the startling discovery of the owner, Colonel Pyncheon, sitting dead in his chair, inserts this short paragraph :

Thus early had that one guest—the only guest who is certain, at one time or another, to find his way into every human dwelling—thus early had Death stepped across the threshold of the House of the Seven Gables!—HAWTHORNE: *Seven Gables*, ch. i.

The reader feels instinctively that death, sudden and mysterious death, is to be a prominent feature in the sequel.

At other times the link-paragraph recalls us to the pre-

cise point in the narrative or discussion from which there has been a departure for some specific purpose; *e. g.* in *The House of the Seven Gables* (ch. xv.), Hepzibah, goaded to frenzy, pours out her full wrath upon the Judge. Then follow several pages, taken up with an analysis of his character, past and present. Then comes this short paragraph, recalling us to the present situation:

But our affair now is with Judge Pyncheon as he stood confronting the fierce outbreak of Hepzibah's wrath. Without premeditation, to her own surprise and indeed terror, she had given vent, for once, to the inveteracy of her resentment, cherished against this kinsman for thirty years.—HAWTHORNE: *Seven Gables*, ch. xv.

Again, the link-paragraph may sum up one or more preceding paragraphs and offer an easy transition to the following subject. Thus, in the *Voyage to Brobdingnag* (ch. iii.), Gulliver delivers at considerable length, in spite of his imperfect knowledge of the language, a speech to the Queen. Then comes the link:

This was the sum of my speech, delivered with great improprieties and hesitation. The latter part was altogether framed in the style peculiar to that people, whereof I learned some phrases from Glumdalclitch while she was carrying me to court.

This is an easy transition to the following paragraph:

The queen . . . was surprised at so much wit and good sense in so diminutive an animal. She . . . carried me to the king, etc.—SWIFT: *Gulliver* (*Brobdingnag*, ch. iii.).

The second chapter of *Silas Marner* ends thus:

But about the Christmas of that fifteenth year a second great change came over Marner's life, and his history became blent in a singular manner with the life of his neighbors.—GEORGE ELIOT: *Silas Marner*, ch. ii., end.

Chapter third introduces the neighbors.

Another good example of summing up and leading on to the next subject is this from De Quincey. After controverting, in two pages, the common opinion that Wordsworth at Grasmere, in 1809, was the idol of a large circle

of admiring neighbors, and showing by many details that Wordsworth was almost a stranger in the country, he inserts the link:

Except, therefore, with the Lloyds, or occasionally with Thomas Wilkinson the Quaker, or very rarely with Southey, Wordsworth had no intercourse at all beyond the limits of Grasmere: and in that valley I was myself, for some years, his sole visiting friend; as, on the other hand, my sole visitors, as regarded that vale, were himself and his family.—DE QUINCEY (*Autobiography*), ii. 440.

The next paragraph is worth quoting for its echo:

Among that family . . . was a little girl whose life . . . and whose death . . . connected themselves with the records of my own life by ties of passion so profound, by a grief so frantic, . . . [then follows the touching story of little Catherine Wordsworth, not the least remarkable incident in a life that abounds in the unusual].

See also Burke, § 126.

Occasionally we meet with a paragraph which does not sum up, but rather expands and illustrates, the thought of the preceding; *e. g.* Macaulay, at the beginning of his second essay on Chatham, devotes one paragraph to the doctrine that “during the forty-six years which followed the accession of the house of Hanover” the Whigs and Tories had exchanged rôles. This is expanded and illustrated in the following remarkable link:

Dante tells us that he saw, in Malebolge, a strange encounter between a human form and a serpent. The enemies, after cruel wounds inflicted, stood for a time glaring on each other. A great cloud surrounded them, and then a wonderful metamorphosis began. Each creature was transfigured into the likeness of its antagonist. The serpent’s tail divided itself into two legs; the man’s legs intertwined themselves into a tail. The body of the serpent put forth arms; the arms of the man shrank into his body. At length the serpent stood up a man, and spake; the man sank down a serpent, and glided hissing away. Something like this was the transformation which, during the reign of George the First, befell the two English parties. Each gradually took the shape and color of its foe; till at length the Tory rose up erect, the zealot of freedom, and the Whig crawled and licked the dust at the feet of power.

It is true that, when these degenerate politicians discussed questions

merely speculative, and, above all, when they discussed questions relating to the conduct of their own grandfathers, they still seemed to differ as their grandfathers had differed, etc.—MACAULAY: *Chatham* (Second Essay).

The initial sentence of the succeeding paragraph has been quoted to show the leading-on.

19. Sequence and Co-ordination of Paragraphs.—

Since no two subjects are treated in the same way, no general rules can be given for determining the order in which one paragraph should follow another, or for estimating the relative size and importance of paragraphs. But one or two suggestions may be of help.

1. *Paragraphs should vary in length; i. e.,* it is desirable to have an alternation of moderately long and moderately short paragraphs. This, which is the practice of the most careful writers, has a twofold advantage: it prevents monotony, and it permits the size of the paragraph to indicate the relative importance of the several sections of the subject. The first twenty-three paragraphs of Macaulay's second essay on the Earl of Chatham exhibit the following variations in line-numbers: * 16, 8, 4, 22, 16, 25, 9, 12, 23, 23, 10, 17, 21, 50, 19, 6, 10, 4, 10, 23, 16, 12, 10. It is interesting to note the very long, 50, 19, followed by the succession of shorts, 6, 10, 4, 10. The long 50-line paragraph describes the partition of powers between Pitt and Newcastle, and goes into many details. It is shared almost evenly between the two men. Although long, it is easily grasped.

2. *Paragraphs following each other may be made to vary, not only in length, but also in quality.* Thus, of the twenty-three paragraphs just cited, the longer ones abound in details, the shorter ones sum up in brief statements. And usually, but not invariably, the longer sentences are in the longer

* The figures will vary somewhat, according to the edition used, but the ratio will remain the same.

paragraphs ; yet the longest paragraph of all has only one sentence of any length, and that near the middle.

The student is not advised to take Macaulay as his sole guide in paragraphing. Other writers have equal claims. De Quincey, when not in quest of the ridiculous, will repay study and imitation. Hawthorne and Irving have an extremely delicate appreciation of the art of paragraphing. Any section of ten to twenty pages, selected from either of these two writers, will reveal many a skilful device in varying the length and quality of the paragraph.

3. What has been said of the length of paragraphs will apply to the *Sequence*. Although no rule can be given for sequence in general, the order of paragraphs in simple *Narration* is usually the chronological. This may be verified by examining the shorter stories of Irving. In *Description* the order is either that of relative importance or that of grouping by natural divisions. Much will depend upon the purpose of the description. Thus, we may describe a town with regard to its topography, or to its architecture, or to its trade and manufactures. Each of these lines of description would necessitate a different order of paragraphing.

Exposition is still less subject to general rules. The only safe advice is to study the methods of experienced writers, especially to cultivate the habit of noting down the subject or leading thought of each successive paragraph of a chapter. This habit will develop the gift of consecutive thinking, which is, after all, the secret of good writing.

20. Paragraphs of Introduction and Conclusion.—In a composition of any length it is customary to introduce the general subject (theme) in a short paragraph, also to state the conclusion in a similar short paragraph. There can be no objection to this practice, provided it is not suffered to become too mechanical and artificial. See § 125.

The length and quality of introductory and concluding paragraphs will vary greatly according to the nature and

amplitude of the composition itself. In an elaborate essay for publication—*e. g.*, an essay by Macaulay—both paragraphs may be somewhat long. An examination of thirty-six essays by Macaulay shows that the longest introduction, that to *Madame D'Arblay*, has about 490 words; the shortest, *Robert Montgomery*, has only 60 words. The average length is approximately 250 words. But Macaulay's essays, being nearly all in the form of book-reviews, do not, perhaps, offer a safe test. The reviewer gives the nominal introductory paragraph, sometimes more than one paragraph, to a brief estimate of the book, before passing to his real subject, the person who is the central figure of the book. Hence we are not always certain which paragraph to take as the introduction. As to the concluding paragraph in Macaulay, that might be assumed *a priori* to tend toward uniformity. But the facts are otherwise. The longest, that to *Lord Holland*, has approximately 630 words; the two shortest, *Restoration Dramatists* and *Walpole's Letters*, have only 30 and 33 words. There are a few others almost as short. These short paragraphs, when examined, will be found to have a peculiar personal character—to state an after-thought to the real conclusion. The average length is perhaps 230 words.

These statistics demonstrate that the representative essayist of the century did not hesitate to write, when he saw fit, quite long introductions and conclusions, and seldom wrote very short ones. His example is counter to the rule usually given, that introductions and conclusions should be short. A cursory examination of vol. iv. of De Quincey, his *Biographies and Biographic Sketches*, reveals an equal amount of freedom in him. In P. G. Hamerton's *Human Intercourse* the introductory paragraphs of the several essays range from 9 words to 270; the concluding, from 37 to 603. The average for the introductory is not much over 100; for the concluding, nearly 300.

21. But the writings of Macaulay, De Quincey, and

Hamerton are not to be looked upon as models after which to construct school compositions and college essays. These latter are necessarily very short and simple in structure. The writer does not attempt to treat the subject fully, but merely to present a few points coherently. Hence the utility of the rule for school and college, that paragraphs of introduction and conclusion—if employed at all—should be short. See § 125.

The introduction should state the general subject as concisely as may be without sacrificing clearness. Probably 50 words would be an ample limit. Webster's argument in the Dartmouth College case is a model:

The general question is, whether the acts of the legislature of New Hampshire of the 27th of June and of the 18th and 26th of December, 1816, are valid and binding on the plaintiffs *without their acceptance or assent*.

The following, somewhat longer, but equally good, is from Ruskin's lecture on *Turner and his Works*:

My object this evening is [not so much to give you any account of the works or the genius of the great painter whom we have so lately lost (which it would require rather a year than an hour to do), as] to give you some idea of the position which his works hold with respect to the landscape of other periods, and of the general condition and prospects of the landscape art of the present day. [I will not lose time in prefatory remarks, as I have little enough at any rate, but will enter abruptly on my subject.]

By suppressing the portions in square brackets, Ruskin might have stated his subject in 40 words; but the extra words have their value, as every reader will see.

If the composition is in simple *Narration*, the introductory paragraph may consist of a brief statement of the time, place, and occasion from which the action starts; *e. g.*:

On the summit of one of the heights of the Odenwald, a wild and romantic tract of Upper Germany, that lies not far from the confluence of the Main and the Rhine, there stood, many, many years since, the

castle of the Baron von Landshort, etc.—IRVING: *The Spectre Bridegroom*.

But there is less need of an introduction in Narration than in any other form of writing.

In *Description* (i. e. a long, circumstantial description) it is advisable to begin by locating the object described. Thus:

Half-way down a by-street of one of our New England towns stands a rusty wooden house, with seven acutely-peaked gables, facing towards various points of the compass, and a huge, clustered chimney in the midst. The street is Pyncheon street; the house is the old Pyncheon house; and an elm tree of wide circumference, rooted before the door, is familiar to every town-born child by the title of the Pyncheon elm, etc.—HAWTHORNE: *Seven Gables*, ch. i.

In *Exposition* and *Argument* it is highly advisable, if not indispensable, to introduce clearly and succinctly the thing to be expounded or the proposition to be established. Thus:

The subject to which I have to beg your attention during the ensuing hour is "The Relation of Physiological Science to Other Branches of Knowledge."

[Here follows a paragraph of personal explanation.]

Regarding Physiological Science, then, in its widest sense, as the equivalent of Biology, the Science of Individual Life, we have to consider in succession:

1. Its position and scope as a branch of knowledge.
2. Its value as a means of discipline.
3. Its worth as practical information.
4. At what period it may best be made a branch of education.

HUXLEY (v.), p. 72.

The concluding paragraph of a composition should, if possible, leave upon the reader's mind an impression of power. It should not merely sum up the writer's views and statements, but it should drive them home by a succession of quick hard blows. There should also be, if the subject admits of it, an expression of feeling. The conclusion of Macaulay's second essay on *The Earl of Chatham* is at once forcible, dignified, and profoundly emotional:

Chatham sleeps near the northern door of [Westminster Abbey], in a spot which has ever since been appropriated to statesmen, as the other end of the same transept has long been to poets. Mansfield rests there, and the second William Pitt, and Fox, and Grattan, and Canning, and Wilberforce. In no other cemetery do so many great citizens lie within so narrow a space. High over those venerable graves towers the stately monument of Chatham, and from above, his own effigy, graven by a cunning hand, seems still, with eagle face and outstretched arm, to bid England be of good cheer and to hurl defiance at her foes. The generation which raised that memorial of him has disappeared. The time has come when the rash and indiscriminate judgments which his contemporaries passed on his character may be calmly revised by history. And history, while, for the warning of vehement, high, and daring natures, she notes his many errors, will yet deliberately pronounce that, among the eminent men whose bones lie near his, scarcely one has left a more stainless, and none a more splendid, name.—MACAULAY: *Chatham* (Second Essay).

The above is oratorical in tone. This is simpler:

But there is another memorial of Edgar Tryan, which bears a fuller record: it is Janet Dempster, rescued from self-despair, strengthened with divine hopes, and now looking back on years of purity and helpful labor. The man who has left such a memorial behind him must have been one whose heart beat with true compassion and whose lips were moved by fervent faith.—GEORGE ELIOT: *Janet's Repentance*, ch. xxviii., end.

The conclusion of Darwin's *Origin of Species* is remarkable for the ability with which the author sums up (see § 59) and makes concrete the results of his reasoning:

It is interesting to contemplate a tangled bank, clothed with many plants of many kinds, with birds singing on the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp earth, and to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms, so different from each other, and dependent upon each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by laws acting around us. These laws, taken in the largest sense, being Growth with Reproduction; Inheritance, which is almost implied by reproduction; Variability, from the indirect and direct action of the conditions of life, and from use and disuse; a Ratio of Increase so high as to lead to a Struggle for Life, and as a consequence to Natural Selection, entailing Divergence of Character and the Extinction of less-improved forms. Thus, from the war of

nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving, namely, the production of the higher animals, directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved.—
DARWIN: *Origin of Species*, ch. xv., end.

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CHAPTER V.

NARRATION.

22. A NARRATIVE is, in general, the statement of the details of something accomplished. This may be an act of nature, *e. g.*, a storm, an earthquake, an eclipse of the sun. Or it may be the act of man, or of some other animal endowed with intelligence and will. Again, it may be real or it may be imagined. Thus, the storm in which the poet Shelley was drowned, and which is narrated in the biographies of him, was real; the snow-storm in which Eppie's mother perished (*Silas Marner*, ch. xii.) existed only in George Eliot's imagination. The story of Philip of Pokanoket in Irving's *Sketch-Book* is real; that of Rip Van Winkle is wholly imaginary. The tales of animals and birds in Æsop's Fables are fictitious; the following is fact:

I have seen a mother-monkey, disturbed in her gambols on the ground by the whining of a tiny baby left half-way up an adjacent tree, suddenly break off, and, hastily shinning up the tree, snatch up the baby, hurry to the very topmost branch, where she plumped it down, as who should say, "Tiresome little wretch!" and then come down to resume her play. Thus is a mischievous midshipman mast-headed, and thus is the British baby sent up to the nursery while mamma amuses herself.—KIPLING, ch. iii. p. 72.

Whatever be the basis of a narrative, whether it be fact or fiction, an act of nature or the deed of man, it must be something more than a passing movement. It must be something that has a clearly-marked beginning and a clearly-marked end. We may narrate the coming on of a storm, its progress, its cessation; but a single flash of light-

ning or the dash of a single wave cannot make up a narrative: it can only be an item in the narrative.

Furthermore, the act narrated must be concrete and individual, not general. By this is meant that it takes place only once or only at rare intervals, and is not repeated incessantly and uniformly. Thus, we may narrate the appearance of a *tidal-wave* at a certain place on a certain day; but the daily ebb and flood of the *regular tides* at that same place we do not narrate, we discuss them in the way of Exposition. We may narrate the beheading of Louis XVI. (fact) or of Sydney Carton (fiction, in Dickens's *Tale of Two Cities*), but we do not narrate the process of death in general. We treat that only in the way of Exposition, medical, philosophic, or religious.

In the matter of length there is every conceivable variation, from Browning's *Ring and the Book* to the very concise fable of the mouse, § 15. Most of the specimens of narration quoted in this book are not complete in themselves, but are only passages selected from a longer narrative. Thus:

Phoebe took leave of the desolate couple and passed through the shop, twinkling her eyelids to shake off a dewdrop; for—considering how brief her absence was to be, and therefore the folly of being cast down about it—she would not so far acknowledge her tears as to dry them with her handkerchief. On the door-step she met the little urchin whose marvellous feats of gastronomy have been recorded in the earlier pages of our narrative. She took from the window some specimen or other of natural history—her eyes being too dim with moisture to inform her accurately whether it was a rabbit or a hippopotamus—put it into the child's hand, as a parting gift, and went her way. Old Uncle Venner was just coming out of his door, with a wood-horse and saw on his shoulder; and, trudging along the street, he scrupled not to keep company with Phoebe, so far as their paths lay together; nor, in spite of his patched coat and rusty beaver, and the curious fashion of his tow-cloth trousers, could she find it in her heart to outwalk him.—HAWTHORNE: *Seven Gables*, ch. xiv.

But there are in all modern literatures innumerable

short stories, only a paragraph or two in length, written either as independent narratives or inserted in a longer narrative in such a way as to be easily detached. Such stories are usually called anecdotes. The following anecdote, told of one of Ruskin's college friends, will serve as a specimen :

When Acland . . . was wrecked in the steamer *Tyne*, off the coast of Dorset, . . . the officers in anxious debate, the crew in confusion, the passengers in hysterics or at prayers, were all astonished, and many scandalized, at the appearance of Dr. Acland from the saloon in punctilious morning dress, with the announcement that "breakfast was ready." To the impatient clamour of indignation with which his unsympathetic conduct was greeted, he replied by pointing out that not a boat could go on shore, far less come out from it, in that state of the tide, and that in the mean time, as most of them were wet, all cold, and at the best must be dragged ashore through the surf, if not swim for their lives in it, they would be extremely prudent to begin the day, as usual, with breakfast. The hysterics ceased, the confusion calmed, what wits anybody had became available to them again, and not a life was ultimately lost.—RUSKIN: *Præterita*, i. 379 (ch. xi.).

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF NARRATION.

The chief principles are three: Unity, Interest, and Sequence.

23. Unity.—This is obtained by observing the principles of Grouping and Climax of Interest. In a narrative of fiction the subordinate persons are grouped around one or more leading persons (called hero and heroine), and the action reaches a point of highest interest (climax), after which it diminishes. In a narrative of fact no such completely artistic method can be resorted to. Yet the narrator, if he is skilful, will select and combine, will abridge or even omit what is of slight interest, and expand fully what is important, thereby introducing artistic method to a limited extent. In narrating natural events one is still more tied down to facts. Yet even here the narrator may select and group with an eye to effect, *e. g.* :

We had just emerged out of this baneful stretch of marshy ground . . . when the forest became suddenly darkened, so dark that I could scarcely read the compass, and a distant murmur increasing into loud soughing and wrestling and tossing of branches and groaning of mighty trees warned us of the approach of a tempest. As the ground round about was most uninviting, we had to press on through the increasing gloom, and then, as the rain began to drip, we commenced to form camp. The tents were hastily pitched over the short scrubby brush, while bill-hooks crashed and axes rang, clearing a space for the camp. The rain was cold and heavily dripped, and every drop, large as a dollar on their cotton clothes, sent a shiver through the men. The thunder roared above, the lightning flashed a vivid light of fire through the darkness, and still the weary caravan filed in until nine o'clock. The rain was so heavy that fires could not be lit, and until three in the morning we sat huddled and crouching amid the cold, damp, and reeking exhalations and minute spray. Then bonfires were kindled, and around these scores of flaming pyramids the people sat, to be warmed into hilarious animation, to roast the bitter manioc, and to still the gnawing pain of their stomachs.—STANLEY: *Darkest Africa*, i. 144.

In the above the thread of artistic unity is found in the varying sensations of discomfort in the travellers.

Short narratives, such as the young are called upon to write, are not troublesome in the matter of unity; but long narratives are extremely difficult, and the discussion of unity in them belongs properly to the study of literature and literary methods.

24. Interest.—What is meant by saying that a narrative should be interesting? Certainly "interesting" is not the same as "exciting," although young readers are apt to confound the two. A story is interesting when it has "point," when it tells us something worth reading, when it adds to our stock of useful knowledge, or opens our eyes to the problems of life and awakens our sympathy in the welfare of others. A story should have a moral, should teach. This does not mean that it should be a sermon. The story of an earthquake is no sermon, yet it interests us by teaching us the ways of Providence. Many stories of human life interest by amusing us, by illustrating the

humorous side of human character. Their value lies in teaching us what to avoid. The exact value and position of the moral in a story has been well stated by Hawthorne:

The author has considered it hardly worth his while, therefore, relentlessly to impale the story with its moral, as with an iron rod,—or, rather, as by sticking a pin through a butterfly,—thus at once depriving it of life and causing it to stiffen in an ungainly and unnatural attitude. A high truth, indeed, fairly, finely, and skilfully wrought out, and crowning the final development of a work of fiction, may add an artistic glory, but is never any truer, and seldom any more evident, at the last page than at the first.—HAWTHORNE: *Seven Gables* (Preface).

At all events, the young writer is not to suppose that the mere recital of things *done* is a narrative. There is a difference between doing and accomplishing, which is neatly hit off in Johnson's parody:

I put my hat upon my head,
And walked into the Strand,
And there I met another man
With his hat in his hand.

(G. B. HILL'S ed. of *Boswell's Johnson*, ii. 136, note 4.

Although it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to put into exact words of definition the difference between a genuine narrative, however brief, and a mere statement of fact, yet the youngest child feels the difference, and the youngest writer should observe it. One need only study the short stories written by any author of ability, and note how he introduces his teachings.

25. Sequence.—In what order should the items or incidents be narrated? No universal rule can be given. Sequence in a narrative running through many paragraphs is like sequence within the paragraph: that order is best which makes upon the reader's mind the clearest and the deepest impression.

In a very short story, especially one dealing with an event of nature, the order is usually chronological; *e. g.*, in the passage from Stanley, § 23. But frequently, even in

quite simple narration, the order of events may be very properly interrupted by the expression of feelings called forth by the events. Thus:

I have presumed to mark the moment of conception [viz. Gibbon's great work on the Decline and Fall of Rome]; I shall now commemorate the hour of my final deliverance. It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a berceau, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake [Geneva], and the mountains [the Alps]. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom and perhaps the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that, whatsoever might be the future date * of my History, the life of the historian must be short and precarious.—GIBBON: *Memoirs*, p. 188.

Sometimes it is necessary to interrupt the direct thread of narrative by inserting a subordinate narrative or statement, the object of which is to introduce certain persons or agencies affecting the principal action. Thus Macaulay, after narrating at length the bitter attacks made upon Hastings and the desperate efforts to remove him from office, states that suddenly all such designs were discontinued, and at the expiration of his term he was quietly reappointed. The following paragraph explains:

The crisis was indeed formidable. That great and victorious empire, on the throne of which George the Third had taken his seat eighteen years before, . . . had been brought to the verge of ruin. In America, millions of Englishmen were at war with the country from which their blood, their language, their religion, and their institutions had been derived. . . . The great powers of Europe . . . now rejoiced in the prospect of a signal revenge. The time was approaching when our island . . . was to be assailed by France, Spain, and Holland, . . . when the British flag was to be scarcely able to protect the British channel. Great

* Date is used here in the sense of *terminus ad quem*.

as were the faults of Hastings, it was happy for our country that at that conjuncture, the most terrible through which she has ever passed, he was the ruler of her Indian dominions.—MACAULAY: *Warren Hastings*.

The above is no digression (§ 28), but a brilliant summary of indispensable information. It also exemplifies the principle that the order of *cause and effect* is even more important than the order of time.

SPECIAL VARIETIES OF NARRATIVE FORM.

26. Reverting Narration.—Ever since the days of the Greeks and Romans there has been a disposition, notably among writers of epic poetry, to narrate certain earlier portions of the story after the main action has been carried on a while. The story goes back, *reverts*, to the real beginning, or at least to an earlier stage. Thus, in the *Odyssey*, the hero, Odysseus, having been shipwrecked on the coast of Phæacia and hospitably entertained there by the king, Alcinoüs (books v.–viii.), narrates to Alcinoüs his previous adventures among the Cicones and Lotos-eaters, with Polyphemus, Æolus, Antiphates, Circe, his descent to the nether world, his escape from the Sirens, etc. (books ix.–xii.). Similarly, in the *Æneid*, Æneas, having been shipwrecked and received by Dido, queen of Carthage (book i.), narrates to her his adventures during the seven years from the fall of Troy to the present moment (books ii. and iii.). In *Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story* the first chapter represents him as dead, and gives a sketch of him in the latter period of his life. His early life and his relations with Tina are begun in chapter ii. The first two chapters of *Daniel Deronda* introduce the heroine, Gwendolen, at Leubronn, a German watering-place. All the rest of book i. (chs. iii.–x.) and part of book ii. (chs. xi.–xv.) narrate Gwendolen's previous life in England and bring the reader back to Leubronn. In Irving's story of *The Widow and her Son* (*Sketch-Book*) we first have the account of the burial

of George Somers, and afterwards the story of his misfortunes and death. See also Hawthorne, § 17.

A remarkable specimen of reverting narrative is Grant Allen's *Recalled to Life*. The opening scene depicts the heroine standing over the body of a murdered man, her father. Her mind is perfectly sound, but she has lost all memory. She cannot recollect how she came to be there, who fired the pistol—in short, any event of her previous life. The rest of the story relates her efforts to recover her memory and reconstruct her past life piece by piece. The narrative is autobiographic in form.

The present remarks are not offered as an adequate treatment of this mode of writing, but only as a hint to the reader to discover additional instances for himself.

27. Overlapping Narration.—In long and complex narratives the personages arrange themselves in groups. Each group has its own peculiar interests and leads its own life, while they all move forward to a common goal, *i. e.*, they co-operate in carrying on the fortunes of the hero. They act upon him, he acts upon them. It is in this linking together of groups that the story-teller has abundant opportunity of displaying his art. He should make it effective without letting it become obtrusive. To discuss the various devices by which groups may be linked would not be feasible in a book like the present. The problem is too complicated, and pertains rather to the study of literary methods. Yet the reader can and should appreciate, in a measure at least, the grouping in Dickens, Scott, George Eliot, and other authors commonly read. A good deal can be accomplished by writing down the name of every person as soon as he or she appears, then, when the list is complete, sorting the persons into their natural groups, and finally determining which persons in every two groups constitute the link.

By overlapping narration is meant briefly this. The narrator tells his story piecemeal, *i. e.*, recounts the sayings

and doings (the action) first of one group, then of a second group (perhaps in a different place), then of a third, and so on. If now the action of the second group, let us say, has been in part simultaneous with that of the first group, the action *overlaps*. An example or two will make this clear. Chapter xxii. (book i.) of *The Old Curiosity Shop* ends with Barbara shelling peas and Kit watching her. Then follow fifteen chapters narrating the doings of Dick Swiveller, Quilp, Little Nell, Mrs. Jarley, etc. Chapter xxxviii. then opens:

Kit, . . . while the matters treated of in the last fifteen chapters were yet in progress, was, as the reader may suppose, gradually familiarizing himself more and more with Mr. and Mrs. Garland, Mr. Abel, the pony, and Barbara, and gradually coming to consider them one and all as his particular private friends, etc.

The story of Nell, after being carried through chapters xlii.-xlvi., breaks off, leaving her in the church-yard. Chapters xlvii.-li. give the story of Kit's mother, Quilp, and the Brass family. Chapter lii. then takes us back to Nell. It is really introduced by the concluding sentence of chapter li.:

Leaving him [Quilp] to visions in which, perhaps, the quiet figures in the old church porch were not without their share, be it our task to rejoin them as they sat and watched.

This linking of the two groups by means of the dwarf's dreams is an ingenious device. There are several more instances of overlapping narration in *The Old Curiosity Shop*. In fact, the whole plot deserves careful study from this point of view.

In *The House of the Seven Gables* there is also an instance of overlapping narration, thus indicated:

Judge Pyncheon, while his two relatives have fled away with such ill-considered haste, still sits in the old parlor, keeping house, as the familiar phrase is, in the absence of its ordinary occupants. To him, and to the venerable House of the Seven Gables, does our story now betake itself, like an owl bewildered in the daylight and hastening back to his hollow tree.—HAWTHORNE: *Seven Gables*, ch. xviii.

The battle of Beal' an Duine in *The Lady of the Lake* (canto vi. st. 16-21), if we consider it merely chronologically, might be classified as overlapping. But if we consider it as something apart from and independent of the main narrative (it is not an *essential* part), we may classify it rather as an Episode (§ 29).

Few writers are as painstaking as Dickens and Hawthorne in indicating the chronology of their narratives. Scott and Thackeray not infrequently leave the reader in uncertainty. But the most careless writer in this respect is George Eliot. She rarely, if ever, informs us explicitly when the narrative passes from one group to another and when it overlaps. Her *Middlemarch* and *Daniel Deronda* are so loosely put together, in this respect, that the reader who wishes to master these stories thoroughly must construct a diary, as it were, of the action.

It is quite possible to compose a long, complex narrative without overlapping, *e. g.*, *David Copperfield*. The explanation is simple: the story is told in strict autobiographic form. David tells only what happened to himself from time to time, and each group appears on the scene only in so far as he is for the time a member of it.

28. Digression.—In a loose, general way, digression may be defined to be wandering from the subject. But there are two kinds of digression, which should be carefully distinguished.

In the one kind the writer violates the unity of the paragraph (§ 4) by introducing matter which is connected with the general subject, but which should be treated by itself in a separate paragraph. Thus, the account of Sir Roger's death, written by his butler, Edward Biscuit:

Upon his coming home, the first complaint he made was, that he had lost his roast-beef stomach, not being able to touch a sirloin, which was served up according to custom; and you know he used to take great delight in it. From that time forward he grew worse and worse, but still kept a good heart to the last. Indeed, we were once in great hope

of his recovery, upon a kind message that was sent him from the widow lady whom he had made love to the forty last years of his life; but this only proved a lightning before death. He has bequeathed to this lady, as a token of his love, a great pearl necklace, and a couple of silver bracelets set with jewels, which belonged to my good old lady his mother; he has bequeathed the fine white gelding, that he used to ride a hunting upon, to his chaplain, because he thought he would be kind to him, and has left you all his books. He has, moreover, bequeathed to the chaplain a very pretty tenement with good lands about it. It being a very cold day when he made his will, he left for mourning, to every man in the parish, a great frieze coat, and to every woman a black riding-hood. It was a most moving sight to see him take leave of his poor servants, commending us all for our fidelity, whilst we were not able to speak a word for weeping. As we most of us are grown gray-headed in our dear master's service, he has left us pensions and legacies, which we may live very comfortably upon, the remaining part of our days. He has bequeathed a great deal more in charity, which is not yet come to my knowledge, and it is peremptorily said in the parish that he has left money to build a steeple to the church; for he was heard to say some time ago, that if he lived two years longer, Coverley church should have a steeple to it. The chaplain tells everybody that he made a very good end, and never speaks of him without tears. He was buried, according to his own directions, among the family of the Coverleys, on the left hand of his father, Sir Arthur. The coffin was carried by six of his tenants, and the pall held up by six of the quorum; the whole parish followed the corpse with heavy hearts, and in their mourning suits, the men in frieze, and the women in riding-hoods.—ADDISON (*Spectator*, 517): *Death of Sir Roger*.

The grotesqueness of the above is produced by the intermixture of incidents of the death-scene with will-making, bequests, and other business. A skilful narrator would have reserved the business for a separate paragraph. But the *Spectator* is intentionally burlesquing the rambling manner of an uneducated servant. In like manner, Shylock's raving over his daughter and his ducats (*Merchant of Venice*, ii. 8) is intended by the dramatist to give to Shylock's really intense grief a strong touch of the ridiculous, in the eyes of Salarino and Solanio at least.

In the other kind, Digression proper, the writer intro-

duces into the story matter which has only a very remote connection with it. Thus Victor Hugo gives in *Les Misérables* a full account of the battle of Waterloo, forty to fifty pages in length, the sole thread of connection being the circumstance that the father of the young hero, Marius, was wounded in the battle. Even Macaulay, who usually keeps closely to his subject, digresses occasionally, *e. g.*, in the essay on Warren Hastings. Here he devotes three or four long paragraphs to considering the question whether Philip Francis was the author of the *Junius* letters, although the question has no bearing whatever upon the quarrel between Francis and Hastings.

29. Episode.—This term is not easily defined, and has often been misapplied. A genuine episode depends upon two conditions: the actors in it are not the principal persons of the story, but minor characters; the action, although growing out of the main story, is not an essential part. Furthermore, the episode is narrated continuously, *i. e.*, it is given all in one place, without interruption, and is readily detached from the main narrative.

The Battle of Beal' an Duine (*Lady of the Lake*, canto vi.) is an episode. Also the trial and execution of Constance and the Monk (*Marmion*, canto ii.); in the *Æneid*, the adventure of Nisus and Euryalus (book ix.); in Swift's satire of *The Battle of the Books*, the episode of Bentley and Wotton, modelled to some extent after Nisus and Euryalus. Matthew Arnold has called his *Sohrab and Rustum* an episode because it commemorates a minor incident in the protracted struggle between the Tartars and Persians. Note the abrupt beginning: "And the first gray of morning filled the east."

There are not very many genuine episodes in the books, ancient or modern, commonly read. The passages frequently termed episodes are in reality incidents of the main narrative expanded to disproportionate length: thus, the parting of Hector from Andromache and Astyanax

(*Iliad*, vi.); the meeting of Odysseus and Nausikaa (*Odyssey*, vi.). It may also be noted that these two passages, and others like them in other books, are famous for beauty of style and conception. Their authors have evidently bestowed upon them more than usual care. The trial-scene in *The Heart of Midlothian*, the very different trial-scene in the *Pickwick Papers*, the death of Judge Pyncheon in *The House of the Seven Gables*, display each the peculiar gift of the author at its best.

30. Intercalated Narrative.—Occasionally we find inserted in the body of the main narrative a story quite independent of, and yet bearing upon it, *e. g.*, the story told by Wandering Willie in *Red Gauntlet* (I., letter xi.). This, probably Scott's most brilliant short story, might with perfect ease be detached from its present place and printed as a separate narrative. Nevertheless, it plays a part in the main narrative by giving a vivid sketch of Darsie Latimer's ancestry. Better still is the story of Alice Pyncheon in *The House of the Seven Gables* (ch. xiii.). The narrator, Holgrave, introduces it as a story which he means "to publish in a magazine;" and in truth it might very well have been printed in the *Godey* or *Graham* of 1851. But no one can read it in its actual place without instantly perceiving that it has a direct, almost organic, connection with the main story. The tale of the Elfin Knight (*Marmion*, iii. 19–25) has also its bearing upon Marmion's fortunes. But *The Stroller's Tale*, *The Convict's Return*, *A Madman's Manuscript*, foisted into the *Pickwick Papers* (chs. iii., vi., xi.), have nothing whatever to do with the adventures of Mr. Pickwick and his friends; they are mere "padding."

31. Retarded and Accelerated Movement.—In every long narrative the action moves in one place more rapidly, in another more slowly. This accelerated or retarded movement is usually the result of design on the part of the writer.

The movement may be retarded either by dwelling upon descriptive details or by introducing a number of minor actions. Thus, in *The House of the Seven Gables* (ch. ii.), the description of the shop and its contents, and the mixed narrative-description of Hepzibah's clumsy attempts to put her wares in order, intensify our sense of her misery. In chapter iii. the visits of Holgrave and Dixey, kind-hearted callers rather than customers, contrast with, and, by the feeling of suspense which they produce, give emphasis to, the coming of the first real customer, the small boy in quest of gingerbread. Also the first half of ch. xvi. is retarded narrative. The interval from Hepzibah's leaving Judge Pyncheon until her return to the parlor is actually only a few minutes, but the visions of terror that crowd her imagination make it seem an hour. In *The Lady of the Lake* (vi. 1-7) the description of the guard-room and its rude soldiers after a night of revelry enhances the effect of Ellen's unexpected appearance. In the *Merchant of Venice* (iv. 1, the trial scene), every appeal for mercy is exhausted by the Duke, Bassanio, Portia. This brings out Shylock's character and intensifies our suspense, until the turn comes abruptly with Portia's

Tarry a little ; there is something else.

On the other hand, movement may be accelerated by suppressing descriptive details and giving only the essential features of the action in short, nervous phrases, or by summing up the incidents in brief. Even the youngest reader will not fail to detect the difference, *e. g.*, in *Gulliver's Travels*, when the voyage from Lilliput back to England is narrated.

One of the best specimens of alternate retarded and accelerated movement is in De Quincey's *The English Mail-Coach*, the section called *The Vision of Sudden Death*. The writer is giving an incident of his own experience ; he tells how the heavy mail-coach on which he was a passenger

nearly ran down, while tearing along by night at full gallop, a slight gig in which were two lovers. As it was, the swingle-bar, or perhaps the haunch of the near leader, struck the gig and almost overturned it. The concluding paragraphs give the scene as viewed by De Quincey looking back from his seat on the coach-box :

Here was the map of the passion that now had finished. The horse was planted immovably, with his fore feet upon the paved crest of the central road. He, of the whole party, might be supposed untouched by the passion of death. The little cany carriage—partly, perhaps, from the violent torsion of the wheels in its recent movement, partly from the thundering blow we had given to it—as if it sympathized with human horror, was all alive with tremblings and shiverings. The young man trembled not, nor shivered. He sat like a rock. But *his* was the steadiness of agitation frozen into rest by horror. As yet he dared not to look round, for he knew that, if anything remained to do, by him it could no longer be done. And as yet he knew not for certain if their safety were accomplished. But the lady—

But the lady—Oh, heavens ! will that spectacle ever depart from my dreams, as she rose and sank upon her seat, sank and rose, threw up her arms wildly to heaven, clutched at some visionary object in the air, fainting, praying, raving, despairing ? Figure to yourself, reader, the elements of the case ; suffer me to recall before your mind the circumstances of that unparalleled situation. From the silence and deep peace of this saintly summer night—from the pathetic blending of this sweet moonlight, dawnlight, dreamlight—from the manly tenderness of this flattering, whispering, murmuring love—suddenly as from the woods and fields—suddenly as from the chambers of the air opening in revelation—suddenly as from the ground yawning at her feet, leaped upon her, with the flashing of cataracts, Death the crowned phantom, with all the equipage of his terrors, and the tiger roar of his voice.

The moments were numbered ; the strife was finished ; the vision was closed. In the twinkling of an eye our flying horses had carried us to the termination of the umbrageous aisle ; at the right angles we wheeled into our former direction ; the turn of the road carried the scene out of my eyes in an instant, and swept it into my dreams for ever.—*DE QUINCEY: Mail-Coach*, xiii. 317.

Observe in the first paragraph the *map* of the passion, the immobility of the young man. In the second, observe the frantic movements of the lady, then the quiet, leisurely

enumeration of the *elements* of the situation, ending in the rush and roar of Death. In the third, note the intense rapidity, how each phrase seems to imitate the hoof-beats of the flying horses.

Without presuming to rival De Quincey, the young writer should at least test occasionally his ability to accelerate and retard in narrating. The effort is well worth making. It will perhaps help to cure the faults of monotony and stiffness. But to this end one must study closely the manner of the best writers, noting the devices by which they keep us in suspense or hurry us on.

For Vivacity in narrating, see *Historical Present*, § 97.

32. Narration Supported by Description.—A narrative may be restricted to the mere statement of what has been done or said. But usually it is accompanied by description—viz. of the place of action (scene), of the persons taking part, and the like.

In narrating an event in nature, *e. g.*, a storm or an earthquake, some description of the place is necessary. And this holds good of the narration of real life, *i. e.*, biography and history. An account of the life of Washington would scarcely be intelligible without some description of Virginia and the other colonies in the eighteenth century. The story of the discovery of America by Columbus would lose much of its fascination were the narrator to omit all description of the vessels in which the voyage was made and of the crews who manned them.

In fiction the story-teller may exercise his discretion. Usually description is omitted from a short story, for the sake of condensation, or is introduced very sparingly. Yet even in short stories the practice varies. Contrast the lack of description in Irving's story of *The Wife* with the wealth of description in *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.

When properly used, description gives a touch of reality, a bodily substance, to the action and the characters. This may be verified by trying to imagine what *The Legend*

of *Sleepy Hollow*, or *The House of the Seven Gables*, or—on a much smaller scale—the story of Alice Pyncheon, would be without the fulness of descriptive details of all kinds. On the other hand, description has its dangers. If too long or too frequent, it diverts the reader's attention from what is after all the main thing, the action, and begets a feeling of impatience which shows itself in the disposition to "skip." In school-work skipping should be repressed as being unjustified. It may be assumed that any book used in school is chosen for its peculiar merits of style, of which the descriptive passages are an essential feature.

By description thus far has been meant the representation of inanimate objects, such as houses, rooms, fields, rivers, etc. But there is another kind of description indispensable to every narrative—viz. the delineation of the outward appearance and character of the personages. It is upon this delineation that the greatest writers have exerted their best efforts. They have recognized the principle that a story, whether of fact or of fiction, can scarcely be a story without word-portraits of the men and women who figure in it. Some of the methods employed are mentioned in §§ 38, 45, 46. In the present chapter attention is merely called to the value of description as an auxiliary to narration. For instance, in *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* our enjoyment of the midnight chase is largely due to our knowing how each rider looks. In *The House of the Seven Gables* the long description of the house is really an introduction to the story.

33. Mixed Narration and Description.—Not infrequently an event is treated in such a manner that the reader would be puzzled to decide whether the account is a narrative or a description. There may be a thread of action running through the whole, and to that extent the account is a narrative. On the other hand, the thread is proportionally so slight, and the descriptive details are so prominent, that the whole produces the effect of a descrip-

tion. An example is the battle of Waterloo, Byron's *Childe Harold*, iii. 21-28: "There was a sound of revelry by night," etc. Another is Wordsworth's *Feast of Brougham Castle*, commemorating the exile of Lord Clifford and his return after the War of the Roses. Still another is the death of Judge Pyncheon, *The House of the Seven Gables*, ch. xviii.; also the drowning of Steerforth and Ham in *David Copperfield*, ii. ch. xxvi. Numerous examples may also be found in every-day reading, in the accounts of public events, such as the inauguration of a new president, the dedication of a new public building, a boat-race, a ball-game. The fact that something is begun and finished makes the account a narrative. But the wealth of details lavished upon the scene and the spectators produces the effect of a description. And, indeed, such a piece of writing is usually called a description.

34. Generalized Narration.—What is meant by this term may be learned most readily from an example:

What evenings, when the candles came and I was expected to employ myself, but—not daring to read an entertaining book—pored over some hard-headed, harder-hearted treatise on arithmetic; when the tables of weights and measures set themselves to tunes, as *Rule Britannia*, or *Away with Melancholy*, and wouldn't stand still to be learnt, but would go threading my grandmother's needle through my unfortunate head, in at one ear and out at the other.

What yawns and dozes I lapsed into, in spite of all my care; what starts I came out of concealed sleeps with; what answers I never got, to little observations that I rarely made; what a blank space I seemed, which everybody overlooked, and yet I was in everybody's way; what a heavy relief it was to hear Miss Murdstone hail the first stroke of nine at night and order me to bed!—DICKENS: *David Copperfield*, i. ch. viii.

David is narrating how he passed, not one evening in particular, but all his evenings, in the vacation at home. The account would probably not represent exactly any one evening, but it represents them all equally well. It will be observed that the phrases and many of the terms are

general, and the passage as a whole is intended to make upon the reader the impression of a monotonous round.

The reader should be on the watch for similar passages in other books, and should learn to distinguish them from genuine narrative, which always deals with a particular event. See also *Generalized Description*, § 47.

BIOGRAPHY AND HISTORY.

35. History and Biography are usually treated under Narration. This is neither practical nor philosophic. They are not forms of writing, but forms of Literature (see § 1, *note*). They may comprise, not only narrative and description, but exposition, argument, persuasion, science, philosophy, art, and many other branches of knowledge. Thus, the biography of a great man, *e. g.*, Milton, should present not merely the facts of his life, his outward appearance and acts, but his character, his opinions, his relations to his predecessors and contemporaries, his influence upon his successors, his general position in the world of letters, politics, and religion. The history of a nation should make clear its origin, the sources of its wealth, the habits of the people, its struggles with other nations, its significance in the development of the world. As Carlyle formulates the demand for Scotland :

By whom and by what means, when and how, was this fair broad Scotland, with its arts and manufactures, temples, schools, institutions, poetry, spirit, national character, created and made arable, verdant, peculiar, great, here as I can see some fair section of it lying, kind and strong (like some Bacchus-tamed lion), from the Castle-hill of Edinburgh?—CARLYLE: *Boswell's Johnson*.

The task of writing history, then, is exceedingly difficult. Even the reading of history thoroughly is so difficult that the study is excluded from school-work. Although some schools require a small amount of English and American history, this is restricted to an acquaintance with a few of the most important facts. Biography, being less extensive

than history, is less bewildering. Yet it presents difficulties of its own, which are not to be overlooked.

Among the books read in school, the following touch upon history: Scott's poems and romances—*e. g.* *Marmion*, *Ivanhoe*, *Quentin Durward*, etc.; Longfellow's *Evangeline* and *The Courtship of Miles Standish*; Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*. But, to read these books with profit as literature, it is not necessary to treat them as historical writings. Their authors have suppressed, and even altered, many facts; to them the story is the main thing, and the history is only a background. The reader, on his part, may content himself with regarding the story as a mere narrative, partly fact, partly fiction. How much of fact, how much of fiction, is a question into which he need not enter.

With the biography read in school the case is otherwise. Macaulay's essays on Clive, Warren Hastings, the Earl of Chatham, and Addison, Johnson's lives of Swift and Gray, Thackeray's *English Humourists*, treat of persons not in the least fictitious, and their aim is to instruct in English literature and politics. We are not free, therefore, to read them as we read *Rip Van Winkle* or *Silas Marner*.

How to read biography adequately is a problem for college and university training. It is in strictness beyond the school range. Yet even in the school much profit can be had from the study, if it be conducted fairly. Certainly the scholar can get some insight into the biographer's art and acquire a relish for it. The following suggestions are not proffered as a theory of biographical criticism, but merely as a help to the young.

1. Ascertain whether the writer is consistent in his opinions, or whether he advances different opinions in different places.

2. After reading one biography, read another of the same person by a different author, and compare the opinions of the two. If they seem to differ, is the difference real, or is it due merely to their viewing the same object from dif-

ferent points, as a house varies when viewed from one side or the other?

3. Note carefully every trait of the man's personal appearance, character, habits, and from these traits construct your own portrait of the man.

4. Sum up all that the man endured, suffered, attempted, and accomplished. Put this in your own language.

5. Is the man compared with other men of his time, or with men in the same line of life before or since? Make an abstract of these comparisons, and also make some comparisons of your own between him and other men (of like position) of whom you have read.

6. Make a summary of the information that you have gained (from this biography) upon the country in which the man lived, and its customs.

THE DRAMA AND FICTION.

36. Although the Drama and Fiction are forms of Literature, and can be adequately treated only in a work which professes to deal with literary art, yet, in view of their connection with Narration, a few remarks here will be of service in enabling the reader to perceive more clearly what that connection really is and what misconceptions are to be guarded against.

Drama.—A drama is neither a narrative nor a description. It is a human story acted, or intended to be acted, before our eyes. It is an imitation of life itself. It is *not told*, but *acted*. What rules or principles should govern such *mimetic* representation of life,—that is a question which lies outside the province of this book. All that need be said here is briefly this: every drama should bring upon the stage a number of persons in conflict with each other; this conflict should be started, carried to a crisis, and brought to a final solution—the dénouement. What these persons say and do to each other on the stage embodies the action of the drama.

But, in addition to the action upon the stage, we are frequently to suppose something done or existing off the stage; and of this we are informed in a narrative or a narrative-description delivered by one of the actors. Thus (*Hamlet*, iv. 7), the account of Ophelia's drowning, told by the Queen, is a narrative-description. Hamlet's account (v. 2) of his opening and altering the commission given to Guildenstern and Rosencrantz is a narrative. So also the story told by the Ghost (i. 5), of the uncle pouring the juice of hebenon into his ears. In *As You Like It* (ii. 1) the account of the Melancholy Jaques is description rather than narration. In *The Merchant of Venice* (i. 3) the story of Jacob and Laban is a narrative; in i. 2 several suitors for the hand of Portia (they do not appear at all in the action) are described by her.

The young reader will find it useful, in reading Shakespeare or any other dramatist, to distinguish such narrative and descriptive passages from the action proper.

Fiction.—A work of fiction, popularly called a novel or a romance, is at bottom a narrative. But it is usually cast, in great part, in the dramatic form—*i. e.*, as dialogue between two or more of the persons. What these persons say to each other, in their own words, corresponds to the action in a drama. But what they say is frequently summed up by the narrator in the ordinary form of narration. So also what they do is narrated. Thus:

(1) "Dear Clifford," said *Hepzibah*, . . . "this is our cousin Phœbe—little Phœbe Pyncheon—Arthur's only child, you know. She has come from the country to stay with us a while; for our old house has grown to be very lonely now."

(2) "Phœbe?—Phœbe Pyncheon?—Phœbe?" repeated the guest. . . . "Arthur's child! Ah, I forget! No matter! She is very welcome."

(3) "Come, dear Clifford, take this chair," said *Hepzibah*, leading him to his place. "Pray, Phœbe, lower the curtain a very little more. Now let us begin breakfast."

(4) The guest seated himself in the place assigned him, and looked strangely around. He was evidently trying to grapple with the present

scene, and bring it home with a more satisfactory distinctness, etc.—
HAWTHORNE: *Seven Gables*, ch. vii.

The paragraphs 1–3 are action in the dramatic sense; the italicized clauses would not be expressed in a drama, or would be given only as stage-directions. Paragraph 4 is ordinary narration.

In addition to the dramatic form, there is in most works of fiction another feature to be noted. The author is apt to utilize his story for conveying his peculiar views upon social, political, religious, and other general issues. And such views are frequently given in the form of Exposition. For illustrative passages see §§ 48, 54. The reader cannot learn too soon or too thoroughly to distinguish genuine narration, generalized narration, and exposition. The writings of Hawthorne and George Eliot abound in expository passages.

CHAPTER VI.

DESCRIPTION.

DESCRIPTION is primarily the delineation of a concrete visible object, real or fictitious (description proper). By extension of the term, the attempt to convey an estimate of a certain person's mind or disposition is also called description (character-description).

DESCRIPTION PROPER.

37. The concrete object described may be a single object, *e. g.*, a certain tree, a certain house, the outward appearance of a certain man; or it may be a group of objects, *e. g.*, a clump of trees, a landscape, an army encamped by a river, as in Matthew Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum*.

The method to be followed is largely determined by one general consideration. What is the *purpose* of the description? Is it merely to give pleasure? Or is it to give information? and if so, what kind of information?

In a fictitious narrative, the chief aim of which is to give pleasure, the objects described may be fictitious also; although writers of fiction frequently introduce not only historical personages, but scenery and buildings that actually exist or have existed. Yet even in this case the writer is apt to treat such persons and things as if they were imaginary; at least, he feels free to omit troublesome details, and give only so much as he needs for his story. Whereas the writer of a description intended for information is required to be scrupulously exact, and also to give the fullest details. Yet there are numerous exceptions on either hand: a writer of fact will occasionally give very little

detail, and a writer of fiction will describe with great fullness. Thus :

No person could imagine anything so beautiful as the ancient town of Bahia. It is fairly embosomed in a luxuriant wood of beautiful trees, and situated on a steep bank, and overlooks the calm waters of the great bay of All Saints. The houses are white and lofty, and, from the windows being narrow and long, have a very light and elegant appearance. Convents, porticos, and public buildings vary the uniformity of the houses ; the bay is scattered over with large ships ; in short—and what can be said more?—it is one of the finest views in the Brazils.—DARWIN : *Life and Letters*, i. 204.

The above may be contrasted with the very full description of St. Cuthbert's cell in Scott's *Abbot*, i. ch. 8.

But, after all, such exceptions are more apparent than real. Darwin's real purpose was not so much to give a scientifically accurate picture of Bahia as to give to his correspondent a general view, to *sketch* the scene. (See § 44.) Scott's real purpose in picturing St. Cuthbert's cell was partly to provide a fit meeting-place for Roland and his grandmother, but chiefly to make the reader estimate the devastation which attended the Protestant Reformation in Scotland.

In order to test the merits of description, one may compare closely a good work of fiction with a good book of travel. In the former the description should certainly be subordinate to the narrative. If the descriptive passages are too numerous and too long, so as to interrupt the narrative and provoke a feeling of impatience, they are faulty. But in a book of travels introducing the reader to scenes and objects little known or perhaps wholly unknown, the descriptive parts are sometimes more important than the narrative, and it is a merit in the writer to make them as full as his limits will permit ; *e. g.* :

As will be seen from the various sketches of the profile, the summit of the range is broken up into many sharp triangular casques or narrow saddle-shaped ridges. Each casque, separately examined, seems to be a miniature copy of the whole range, and dented by the elements, time

and weather, wind, rain, frost, and snow ; and every side of Ruwenzori appears to represent, though in an acuter degree, the multitudinous irregularities of slopes and crests so characteristic of its mighty neighbours which lie nearest to us, and are fully exposed to the naked eye. Mostly all these triangular casque-like tops of the range are so precipitous that, despite the everlasting snowfalls hardened by the icy winds blowing over their exposed sides and summits, very little snow is seen ; but about 300 feet below, as may be estimated, ground more adapted for the retention of the snow is found, which in some parts is so extensive as to represent a vast field. Below this, however, another deep precipice exposes its brown walls, and at the foot of it spreads out another great field of snow joined here and there by sloping ground, and this explains why the side of the range presented to view is not uniformly covered with snow, and why the fields are broken up by the brown patches. For quite 3000 feet from the summit, as may be seen most clearly from the view obtained from Karimi, there is illustrated a great snowy continent enclosing numerous brown islands.—STANLEY: *Darkest Africa*, ii. 325.

The above—one of a series of paragraphs upon the great snow-range of Equatorial Africa—is perfectly proper ; Stanley is announcing to the civilized world a great discovery.

CHARACTER-DESCRIPTION.

38. This, like description proper, may be either fact or fiction. In either case it is extremely difficult—too difficult (except in a very simple form) for young writers. The greatest historians and the greatest poets and romancers have put forth their best efforts in delineating the characters of their heroes. Occasionally, even, we see poet and historian in rivalry, as it were. Thus, Green's portrait of Queen Elizabeth :

Her moral temper recalled in its strange contrasts the mixed blood within her veins. She was at once the daughter of Henry and of Anne Boleyn. From her father she inherited her frank and hearty address, her love of popularity and of free intercourse with the people, her dauntless courage, and her amazing self-confidence. Her harsh, man-like voice, her impetuous will, her pride, her furious outbursts of anger, came to her with her Tudor blood. . . . But strangely in contrast with the violent outlines of her Tudor temper stood the sensuous, self-indul-

gent nature she derived from Anne Boleyn. Splendor and pleasure were with Elizabeth the very air she breathed. . . . She loved gayety and laughter and wit. A happy retort or a finished compliment never failed to win her favor. . . . Her vanity remained, even to old age, the vanity of a coquette in her teens. No adulation was too fulsome for her, no flattery of her beauty too gross. . . . Her levity, her frivolous laughter, her unwomanly jests, gave color to a thousand scandals. Her character, in fact, like her portraits, was utterly without shade. Of womanly reserve or self-restraint she knew nothing. No instinct of delicacy veiled the voluptuous temper which had broken out in the romps of her girlhood, and showed itself almost ostentatiously throughout her later life.—GREEN: *Short History*, etc., ch. vii. sec. 3.

may be compared with Tennyson's:

Many points weather'd, many perilous ones,
At last a harbour opens; but therein
Sunk rocks—they need fine steering—much it is
To be nor mad, nor bigot—have a mind—
Nor let priests' talk, or dream of worlds to be,
Mischance things about her—sudden touches
For him, or him—sunk rocks; no passionate faith—
But—if let be—balance and compromise;
Brave, wary, sane to the heart of her—a Tudor
School'd by the shadow of death—a Boleyn, too,
Glancing across the Tudor—not so well.

TENNYSON: *Queen Mary*, v. sc. 5.

The speech is uttered by Cecil (Burleigh) as a quasi-prophecy, while Elizabeth, still princess, is at the death-bed of her sister Mary.

Character is something intangible, invisible, and therefore not to be drawn. In strictness we can only enumerate certain mental traits of the person, as courage, jealousy, prudence, etc. Nevertheless, a good writer may make the person *reveal his character in his actions*. Thus:

They now went below stairs, where Phœbe—not so much assuming the office as attracting it to herself by the magnetism of innate fitness—took the most active part in preparing breakfast. The mistress of the house, meanwhile, as is usual with persons of her stiff and unmalleable cast, stood mostly aside. . . . Phœbe, and the fire that boiled the kettle, were equally bright, cheerful, and efficient in their respective offices.

. . . Whatever she did, too, was done without conscious effort, and with frequent outbreaks of song, which were exceedingly pleasant to the ear, etc.—HAWTHORNE: *Seven Gables*, ch. v.

DIFFICULTIES OF DESCRIPTION.

39. Every one experienced in writing knows that describing is always a difficult task. This difficulty, which lies in the nature of the work itself, was first treated philosophically by the German critic Lessing. Objects, and parts of an object, exist simultaneously in space; when we look at them, our eye perceives them instantaneously, or almost instantaneously. This is expressed in the phrase “taking in an object or a scene at a glance.” Whereas words and phrases follow one another in time. Therefore, when we undertake to describe an object by means of words and phrases, we use a slow, measurable process as a substitute for one that is practically instantaneous. The result is that when we get to the end of our description the reader has had time to forget the beginning. If he really desires to profit by the description, he must recollect each step, and from these recollections construct for himself a mental image of the whole. This, of course, is difficult. The reader need only apply the test to any long description of a complicated object or scene. He will perceive that in order to get his mental image he must make a severe and prolonged conscious mental effort. Hence the demand for pictures, drawings, maps, etc. in books of travel, of science, and the like, in which the description of visible objects forms an essential part. In works in which description is subordinate to narration or exposition, *e. g.*, in biography, history, essay, romance, various means may be resorted to for overcoming or avoiding the difficulty.

40. Diagram; Points of Reference.—If the description is necessarily long, the writer may begin by giving an outline of the scene. Thus Victor Hugo, in *Les Misérables*, opens his account of Waterloo with the statement:

Those who would get a clear idea of the battle of Waterloo have only to lay down upon the ground in their mind a capital A. The left stroke of the A is the road from Nivelles, the right stroke is the road from Genappe, the cross of the A is the sunken road. . . . The top of the A is Mont Saint Jean; Wellington is there, etc.

De Quincey, in order to make clear the general situation of the incident narrated in his *English Mail-Coach* (see § 31), appends the note:

Suppose a capital Y. Lancaster is at the foot of this letter; Liverpool at the top of the *right* branch; Manchester at the top of the *left* branch; Proud Preston at the center, etc.

Without resorting to such mechanical devices, a skilful writer may indicate lines and outlines. Thus:

This lake [Como] exceeds anything I have ever beheld in beauty, with the exception of the Arbutus Islands in Killarney. It is *long and narrow, and has the appearance of a mighty river* winding among the mountains and forests. We sailed from the town of Como to a tract of country called "The Tremezina," and saw the various aspects presented by that part of the lake. The mountains between Como and that village, or rather cluster of villages, are covered on high with chestnut forests, the eating-chestnuts on which the inhabitants of the country subsist in time of scarcity, which sometimes descend to the very verge of the lake, overhanging it with their hoary branches. But usually the immediate border of *this shore* is composed of laurel trees, and bay, and myrtle, and wild fig trees, and olives, which grow in the crevices of the rock, and overhang the caverns, and shadow the deep glens, which are filled with the flashing light of the waterfalls. Other flowering shrubs, which I cannot name, grow there also. On high, the towers of village churches are seen white among the dark forests. Beyond, on *the opposite shore, which faces the south*, the mountains descend less precipitously to the lake, and although they are much higher, and some covered with perpetual snow, there intervenes between them and the lake a range of lower hills, which have glens and rifts opening to the other, such as I should fancy the abysses of Ida or Parnassus. Here are plantations of olive, and orange, and lemon trees, which are now so loaded with fruit that there is more fruit than leaves; and vineyards. *This shore* of the lake is one continued village, and the Milanese nobility have their villas here. The union of culture and the untamable profusion and loveliness

of nature is here so close that the line where they are divided can hardly be discovered.—SHELLEY: *Letters*, p. 25.

The words here italicized give the reader his “bearings.”

41. Shifting the Point of View, or giving the description in stages. This introduces narration as a help to description. The dry enumeration of parts is turned into a succession of views. In the following, the eye instinctively passes from group to group:

It was such a strange scene to me, and so confined and dark, that at first I could make out hardly anything; but by degrees it cleared, as my eyes became more accustomed to the gloom, and I seemed to stand in a picture by Ostade. Among the great beams, bulks, and ringbolts of the ship, and the emigrant-berths, and chests, and bundles, and barrels, and heaps of miscellaneous baggage—lighted up, here and there, by dangling lanterns, and elsewhere by the yellow daylight straying down a windsail or a hatchway—were crowded groups of people, making new friendships, taking leave of one another, talking, laughing, crying, eating, and drinking; some, already settled down into the possession of their few feet of space, with their little households arranged, and tiny children established on stools or in dwarf elbow-chairs; others, despairing of a resting-place, and wandering disconsolately. From babies who had but a week or two of life behind them, to crooked old men and women who seemed to have but a week or two of life before them; and from ploughmen bodily carrying out soil of England on their boots, to smiths taking away samples of its soot and smoke upon their skins; every age and occupation appeared to be crammed into the narrow compass of the ‘tween-decks.—DICKENS: *David Copperfield*, ii. ch. xxviii.

In this, the view from the lofty tower:

What made the valley look still wider was the two or three varieties of weather that were visible on its surface, all at the same instant of time. Here lay the quiet sunshine; there fell the great black patches of ominous shadow from the clouds; and behind them, like a giant of league-long strides, came hurrying the thunderstorm which had already swept midway across the plain. In the rear of the approaching tempest brightened forth again the sunny splendor which its progress had darkened with so terrible a frown.

All round this majestic landscape the bald-peaked or forest-crowned mountains descended boldly upon the plain, etc.—HAWTHORNE: *Marble Faun*, ii. ch. iii.

is quickened by the shifting of vision. See also the well-known description of Dover Cliff, *King Lear*, iv. 6.

42. Introducing the Personal Element.—This is easier to illustrate than to define. The writer may impart the spirit of the scene by introducing details which will awaken in the reader's mind certain associations. Or, by mentioning the impressions made by the scene upon an observer, he may create similar impressions in the reader. Thus:

Phoebe found an unexpected charm in this little nook of grass and foliage and aristocratic flowers and plebeian vegetables. The eye of Heaven seemed to look down into it pleasantly, and with a peculiar smile, as if glad to perceive that nature, elsewhere overwhelmed and driven out of the dusty town, had here been able to retain a breathing-place. The spot acquired a somewhat wilder grace, and yet a very gentle one, from the fact that a pair of robins had built their nest in the pear tree and were making themselves exceedingly busy and happy in the dark intricacy of its boughs. Bees, too, . . . had thought it worth their while to come hither. . . . Yet, late as it now was, there still arose a pleasant hum out of one or two of the squash-blossoms, in the depths of which these bees were plying their golden labor.—HAWTHORNE: *Seven Gables*, ch. vi.

Hawthorne has made the old garden *homelike* by reviving our slumbering recollections. The robins and the bees, too, are old friends. It is also to be noted that the pear tree and the squash are not mentioned independently, but only in connection with the robins and the bees. Animated nature thus introduces inanimate. This is again a touch of action, as distinct from mere description.

The following is a specimen of describing by means of the impressions produced upon the mind of an observer. The scene is Loch Katrine:

From the steep promontory gazed
The stranger, raptured and amazed,
And, "What a scene were here," he cried,
"For princely pomp or churchman's pride!
On this *bold brow*, a lordly tower;
In that *soft vale*, a lady's bower;

On yonder meadow far away,
 The turrets of a cloister gray;
 How blithely might the bngle-horn
 Chide on the lake the lingering morn!
 How sweet at eve the lover's lute
 Chime when the *groves* were still and mute!
 And when the midnight moon should lave
 Her forehead in the silver wave,
 How solemn on the ear would come
 The holy matin's distant hum,
 While the deep peal's commanding tone
 Should wake, in yonder *islet* lone,
 A sainted hermit from his cell," etc.

SCOTT: *The Lady of the Lake*, i. xv.

Fitz-James, seeing Loch Katrine for the first time, supposes the neighborhood uninhabited; instantly his vivid imagination turns certain conspicuous parts of the landscape (*italicized*) to possible future use. We see through his eyes. Compare the description of Edinburgh in *Marmion*, iv. xxx.

43. Dynamic Description,* or turning the description into narration. This is somewhat akin to the use of the personal element, but is distinct from it and is far more vivid. The theory was first expounded by Lessing, who called attention to the leading example, the Shield of Achilles, *Iliad*, xviii. 478-608. Here we have, not a description of the shield when made, but a minute account, step by step, of the *making* of it by Vulcan. In Goethe's *Hermann und Dorothea* (iv. 1-59) the mother goes from place to place in search of her son; the passage is in reality an indirect description of the stables, garden, vineyard, fields—in short, the family estate.

De Foe, wishing to inform his readers that Robinson Crusoe is upon an island of a certain size and kind, narrates thus:

* This term is used in Genung's *Practical Rhetoric*, p. 335, but in a different sense.

My next work was to view the country, and seek a proper place for my habitation. . . . Where I was, I yet knew not—whether on the continent or on an island, whether inhabited or not inhabited, whether in danger of wild beasts or not. There was a hill not above a mile from me, which rose up very steep and high, and which seemed to overtop some other hills, which lay as in a ridge from it northward. I took out one of the fowling pieces, . . . and thus armed I travelled for discovery up to the top of that hill, where, after I had with great labour and difficulty got to the top, I saw my fate to my great affliction, viz., that I was in an island environed every way with the sea, no land to be seen, except some rocks which lay a great way off, and two small islands less than this, which lay about three leagues to the west.—DE FOE: *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 60.

One of the most striking examples of genuine dynamic description is the following, where De Quincey calls upon an imaginary painter to come to his aid:

But here, to save myself the trouble of too much verbal description, I will introduce a painter, and give him directions for the rest of the picture. Painters do not like white cottages, unless a good deal weather-stained; but, as the reader now understands that it is a winter night, his services will not be required except for the *inside* of the house.

Paint me, then, a room seventeen feet by twelve, and not more than seven and a half feet high. This, reader, is somewhat ambitiously styled, in my family, the drawing-room; but, being contrived "a double debt to pay," it is also, and more justly, termed the library; for it happens that books are the only article of property in which I am richer than my neighbours. Of these I have about five thousand, collected gradually since my eighteenth year. Therefore, painter, put as many as you can into this room. Make it populous with books; and, furthermore, paint me a good fire; and furniture plain and modest, befitting the unpretending cottage of a scholar. And near the fire paint me a tea-table; and (as it is clear that no creature can come to see one on such a stormy night) place only two cups and saucers on the tea-tray; and, if you know how to paint such a thing, symbolically or otherwise, paint me an eternal tea-pot—eternal *a parte ante*, and a *parte post*; for I usually drink tea from eight o'clock at night to four in the morning. And, as it is very unpleasant to make tea, or to pour it out for one's self, paint me a lovely young woman sitting at the table. Paint her arms like Aurora's, and her smiles like Hebe's; but no, dear M—! *

* His wife.

not even in jest let me insinuate that thy power to illuminate my cottage rests upon a tenure so perishable as mere personal beauty, or that the witchcraft of angelic smiles lies within the empire of any earthly pencil, etc.—DE QUINCEY (*Confessions*): iii. 408.

Compare Alice Carey's poem, *An Order for a Picture*.

All highly imaginative and graphic writing contains dynamic passages; *e. g.*:

See how she rushes noiselessly, like a pale meteor, along the passages and up the gallery stairs! Those gleaming eyes, those bloodless lips, that silent tread, make her look like the incarnation of a fierce purpose, rather than a woman. The mid-day sun is shining on the armor in the gallery, making mimic suns on bossed sword-hilts and the angles of polished breastplates. Yes, there are sharp weapons in the gallery. There is a dagger in that cabinet; she knows it well. And as a dragon-fly wheels in its flight to alight for an instant on a leaf, she darts to the cabinet, takes out the dagger, and thrusts it into her pocket, etc.—GEORGE ELIOT: *Mr. Gilfil*, ch. xiii.

The following stands midway between dynamic description and description by stages:

The house had that pleasant aspect of life which is like the cheery expression of comfortable activity in the human countenance. You could see, at once, that there was the stir of a large family within it. A huge load of oak-wood was passing through the gateway, towards the out-buildings in the rear; the fat cook—or probably it might be the housekeeper—stood at the side-door, bargaining for some turkeys and poultry which a countryman had brought for sale. Now and then a maid-servant, neatly dressed, and now the shining sable face of a slave, might be seen bustling across the windows in the lower part of the house. At an open window of a room in the second story, hanging over some pots of beautiful and delicate flowers—exotics, but which had never known a more genial sunshine than that of the New England autumn—was the figure of a young lady, an exotic, like the flowers, and beautiful and delicate as they. Her presence imparted an indescribable grace and faint witchery to the whole edifice.—HAWTHORNE: *Seven Gables*, ch. xiii.

The approach of the boats in *The Lady of the Lake* (ii. xvi.) is an interesting study. Is it dynamic description? Or is it genuine narrative with the effect of description?

44. Sketch; Suggestion.—Where ample details are not

positively required, it is always possible, and usually advisable, to abridge the description into a sketch. The best writings are full of such sketching, in which the writer gives only the salient points or features. In fact, the ability to sketch effectively is sure evidence of a writer's power; *e. g.*:

Noble Mansion! There stoodest thou, in deep Mountain Amphitheatre, on umbrageous lawns, in thy serene solitude; stately, massive, all of granite; glittering in the western sunbeams, like a palace of El Dorado, overlaid with precious metal. Beautiful rose up, in wavy curvature, the slope of thy guardian Hills: of the greenest was their sward, embossed with its dark-brown frets of crag, or spotted by some spreading solitary Tree and its shadow.—CARLYLE: *Sartor Resartus*, ii. ch. v.

From the classic writings we may select this:

A thousand fires burnt brightly; and round each
Sat fifty warriors in the ruddy glare;
Champing the provender before them laid,
Barley and rye, the tethered horses stood
Beside the cars, and waited for the morn.

Iliad, viii. 562 (Derby's translation).

Compare this with Carlyle, § 97.

Somewhat longer, but still a sketch, is the following:

A very ancient woman, in a white short gown and a green petticoat, with a string of gold beads about her neck, and what looked like a night-cap on her head, had brought a quantity of yarn to barter for the commodities of the shop. She was probably the very last person in town who still kept the time-honored spinning-wheel in constant revolution. It was worth while to hear the croaking and hollow tones of the old lady and the pleasant voice of Phoebe mingling in one twisted thread of talk, etc.—HAWTHORNE: *Seven Gables*, ch. v.

That it is a sketch will be evident if we contrast it with the following full-length portrait:

She had on a light dress which sat loosely about her figure, but did not disguise its liberal, graceful outline. A heavy mass of straight jet-black hair had escaped from its fastening and hung over her shoulders. Her grandly-cut features, pale, with the natural paleness of a brunette, had premature lines about them, telling that the years had been length-

ened by sorrow, and the delicately-curved nostril, which seemed made to quiver with the proud consciousness of power and beauty, must have quivered to the heart-piercing griefs which had given that worn look to the corners of the mouth. Her wide-open black eyes had a strangely fixed, sightless gaze, as she paused at the turning, and stood silent before her husband.—GEORGE ELIOT: *Janet's Repentance*, ch. iv.

By *Suggestion* is here meant the introduction of such traits and terms as lead the reader easily and naturally to think out the rest. The writer puts the reader in a *contemplative* mood; *e. g.*, the description of the philosopher at the North Cape on a June midnight:

Silence as of death, for midnight, even in the Arctic latitudes, has its character: nothing but the granite cliffs ruddy-tinged, the peaceable gurgle of that slow-heaving Polar Ocean, over which in the utmost North the great Sun hangs low and lazy, as if he too were slumbering. Yet is his cloud-couch wrought of crimson and cloth-of-gold; yet does his light stream over the mirror of waters, like a tremulous fire-pillar, shooting downwards to the abyss, and hide itself under my feet. In such moments, Solitude also is invaluable; for who would speak, or be looked on, when behind him lies all Europe and Africa, fast asleep, except the watchmen; and before him the silent Immensity, and Palace of the Eternal, whereof our Sun is but a porch-lamp.—CARLYLE: *Sartor Resartus*, ii. ch. viii.

Another highly suggestive passage is this:

We know not how to characterize, in any accordant and compatible terms, the Rome that lies before us; its sunless alleys, and streets of palaces; its churches, lined with the gorgeous marbles that were originally polished for the adornment of pagan temples; its thousands of evil smells, mixed up with fragrance of rich incense diffused from as many censers; its little life, deriving feeble nutriment from what has long been dead. Everywhere, some fragment of ruin suggesting the magnificence of a former epoch; everywhere, moreover, a Cross—and nastiness at the foot of it. As the sum of all, there are recollections that kindle the soul, and a gloom and languor that depress it beyond any depth of melancholic sentiment that can be elsewhere known.—HAWTHORNE: *Marble Faun*, i. ch. xii.

Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* is all sketch and suggestion; hence its peculiar charm and power.

45. Figurative Language.—How description may be aided by figurative language is readily learned from examples. The usual figures are simile, comparison, metaphor, and personification. Thus:

Even as it was, a change grew visible; a change partly to be regretted, although whatever charm it infringed upon was repaired by another, perhaps more precious. She was not so constantly gay, but had her moods of thought. . . . Her eyes looked larger and darker and deeper; so deep, at some silent moments, that they seemed *like Artesian wells, down, down, into the infinite*.—HAWTHORNE: *Seven Gables*, ch. xii.

Wonderfully expressive is the following metaphor in Webster's apostrophe to Lafayette:

Fortunate, fortunate man! With what measure of devotion will you not thank God for the circumstances of your extraordinary life! You are connected with both hemispheres and with two generations. Heaven saw fit to ordain that *the electric spark of liberty should be conducted through you from the New World to the Old*, etc.—WEBSTER: *Bunker Hill*.

Carlyle's description of the vanity of the two Boswells, father and son, so different in kind, is remarkable for its graphic humor:

Old Auchinleck had, if not the gay, tail-spreading, peacock vanity of the son, no little of the slow-stalking, contentious, hissing vanity of the gander; a still more fatal species.—CARLYLE: *Boswell's Johnson*.

The value of personification, *i. e.*, giving to inanimate objects the properties of life, may be learned from Hawthorne's description of the trees in the Villa Borghese; the impression of hoary antiquity is deepened by the ironical "only a few years ago":

The ilex trees, so ancient and time-honored were they, seemed to have lived for ages undisturbed, and to feel no dread of profanation from the axe any more than overthrow by the thunder-stroke. It had already passed out of their dreamy old memories that only a few years ago they were grievously imperilled by the Gaul's last assault upon the walls of Rome. As if confident in the long peace of their lifetime, they assumed attitudes of indolent repose. They leaned over the turf in ponderous grace, throwing abroad their great branches without danger of

interfering with other trees, though other majestic trees grew near enough for dignified society, but too distant for constraint.—HAWTHORNE: *Marble Faun*, i. ch. viii.

46. Epithet.—By this is meant an adjective indicating some quality or attribute which the writer regards as characteristic of the person or thing described. The term may be extended to include a noun or noun-phrase having the effect of a characteristic adjective. Classical students are familiar with the Homeric epithets: "well-greaved" Greeks; "white-armed" Juno; "blue-eyed" Minerva, etc. Folk-poetry is full of such conventional epithets, which have lost nearly all their original significance and become mere tags or labels. Modern literature discards conventional epithets, and employs only such adjectives and phrases as really *distinguish* the person or object. Among modern prose-writers Carlyle is the one most given to epithets. Thus, in a letter to Emerson he sums up his description of Daniel Webster in the clause, "I have not traced as much of *silent Berserkir* rage, that I remember, in any other man." The epithet marks Webster's force of suppressed passion. Emerson, in reply, describes Carlyle as having "thirsty, portrait-eating, portrait-painting eyes." Carlyle's use of epithet is excessive; it often amounts to nicknaming. He incessantly speaks of the very stout Countess of Darlington as the "cataract of tallow;" her opposite, the Duchess of Kendal, as the "Maypole, or lean human nailrod;" political economy is "the dismal science." Every reader of *David Copperfield* will remember Uriah Heep's use of the word "'umble;" also the application of "respectable," "respectability," to Littimer, in ch. xxi. In Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* (211) "the star-dogged Moon" is most striking. Note also: "I stole from court, . . . Cat-footed thro' the town," Tennyson's *Princess*, i. 103; or Lady Blanche's eye, "A lidless watcher of the public weal," iv. 306.

The happy use of epithet is a badge of ability; one

must have a keen eye and the gift of language, also sound taste. It is dangerous ground for the young writer.

47. Generalized Description.—This is analogous to generalized narration (§ 34). In it the writer delineates a particular group or assemblage, not as it actually appeared on a certain occasion, and only then, but as it may have appeared on any one of a number of occasions; *e. g.*, this account of the famous weekly “Punch” dinners:

On Wednesday evenings the celebrated hebdomadal dinner is held, when the contents of the paper for the following week are discussed and determined. Upstairs the sacred function is held, in a room reached by an ancient and rather crazy staircase. Sir Joseph Paxton and a lady—the wife, I believe, of one of the publishers—are said to be the only strangers who ever were admitted to witness this esoteric celebration. The “table”—at which only *the staff*, and not even the regular outside contributors, have any right or chance to sit—is then surrounded by the gentlemen of the staff, artists and writers, presided over by the editor, and supported with more or less regularity by Mr. Bradbury and Mr. William Agnew, the proprietors. As a piece of furniture this hospitable but rather primitive board is not of much account, being of plain deal, oblong in shape, with rounded ends. But its associations render it a treasure among treasures; for at this table every man upon the staff from the first has carved his name with a penknife; and here may be seen the handiwork of those so many of whom are on England’s roll of fame, as well as that of others who, with less of genius, have still a strong claim on the gratitude and the recollection of the people. The editor, as I have said, presides; should he be unavoidably absent, another writer—usually, nowadays, Mr. Arthur à Beckett—takes his place, the duty never falling to an artist. Mr. Burnand—who as a president is believed to excel all previous editors, as Mr. Frederick Leighton surpasses all past P. R. A.’s—invites suggestions, listening, weighing, and, with rare tact and art, “drawing” his staff as well as any artist upon it could. Dinner is over and the cloth is removed before the business of the evening is touched upon. Jokes, laughter, and discussion are the order of the evening. On the editor’s right sit Mr. Tenniel, Mr. Du Maurier, Mr. Sambourne, Mr. Furniss, and Mr. Reed; and then there are Mr. à Beckett, Mr. Milliken—one of the most talented, as he is one of the most modest men upon the paper—Mr. (Anstey) Guthrie, Mr. Lucy (“Toby”), and Mr. Lehmann.—G. S. LAYARD: *Life and Letters of C. S. Keene*.

How are we to classify the description of an object, one of hundreds or thousands, all alike, *e. g.*, a rifle, a watch, a sewing-machine? Is it an ordinary description, or a generalized? Or is it exposition? Whatever theoretical answer we may give, we shall not err practically if we treat it as an ordinary description, for the reason that, in the describing, we start from one individual object and delineate it just as we see it. Our delineation is not influenced by the circumstance that it will fit all others. The describing is concrete, not general.

For *Expository Description* see § 54.

CHAPTER VII.

EXPOSITION.

48. EXPOSITION may be characterized as that form of composition in which the writer discusses, not a single object or event, but objects or events in their general aspects, or inculcates a general principle, or defines a general term.

Thus, to write of the death of a certain person is description or narration; but to write upon death in general is exposition. To delineate the features of a certain man is description; to tell wherein man in general differs from other animals is exposition. It is also exposition to explain the working of a steam-engine, or to set forth the advantages of punctuality.

Text-books of science, history, literature, are expository; so are essays. In text-books and essays, it is true, we often find descriptive or narrative passages, but the book or essay is in the main expository. Its aim is to acquaint us with the *general* truths of science or history, or with the *general* relation of an individual to his times; *e. g.*, Macaulay's essay on Warren Hastings, although it contains a good deal of narration and description, is, as a whole, an exposition of the policy of Hastings, his services to England, and his position in the history of the world.

As descriptive and narrative passages occur in writings that are essentially exposition, so expository passages occur in writings essentially description or narration. Such an expository passage usually embodies a passing reflection or meditation; it *moralizes*, as we say, upon the

persons described or the events narrated. A very graceful example is in the scene where Donatello calls upon Miriam in her studio and finds her "busied with the feminine task of mending a pair of gloves":

There is something extremely pleasant, and even touching—at least, of very sweet, soft, and winning effect—in this peculiarity of needle-work, distinguishing women from men. Our own sex is incapable of any such by-play aside from the main business of life; but women—be they of what earthly rank they may, however gifted with intellect or genius, or endowed with awful beauty—have always some little handiwork ready to fill the tiny gap of every vacant moment. A needle is familiar to the fingers of them all. A queen, no doubt, plies it on occasion; the woman-poet can use it as adroitly as her pen; the woman's eye, that has discovered a new star, turns from its glory to send the polished little instrument gleaming along the hem of her kerchief. . . . A vast deal of human sympathy runs along this electric line, stretching from the throne to the wicker-chair of the humblest seamstress, and keeping high and low in a species of communion with their kindred beings, etc.—HAWTHORNE: *Marble Faun*, i. ch. 5.

Even a general proposition (assertion), which is in strictness something to be proved (see § 63), is usually first expounded, that the reader may clearly perceive the precise point to be proved. Thus, whoever undertakes to persuade us that "fortune favors the bold" should first explain what he means by "fortune" and by "bold;" for by fortune some persons might understand mere "luck," others "providence;" "bold" might mean "venturesome," or again, "knowing the danger, but not shrinking from it."

In discussing a general moral theme the writer frequently goes beyond exposition, and proceeds to apply and enforce his teaching for the reader's personal improvement. This is the practice in sermons, which are usually the exposition of Christian doctrine.

The various processes of exposition proper may be summed up under three heads: Definition, Classification, General Statement.

DEFINITION.

49. Defining an object means separating it from all other objects by marking the boundary-lines; *e. g.*, a telescope is said to define accurately when it enables us to see clearly the lines of a heavenly body. A photograph is poor in definition when the lines are faint or blurred. In rhetoric and logic we define a term when we distinguish it from every other term.

Defining, in the strict sense, is extremely difficult, too difficult for those who have not mastered logical methods, for it is essentially logical in its procedure. It consists in stating the genus and the differentia, *i. e.*, the class to which the object defined belongs, and the peculiarities which differentiate it from everything else of that class. Thus Ruskin defines architecture as:

"The art which so disposes and adorns the edifices raised by man for whatsoever uses, that the sight of them contributes to his mental health, power, and pleasure."—RUSKIN: *Seven Lamps*, ch. i.

In other words, building ("*edifice*") is the genus; man's pleasure is the differentia.

Science, especially mathematics and physics, abounds in rigorous definitions; *e. g.*, "a circle is a plane figure contained by one line everywhere equidistant from a point within called the centre," *i. e.*, plane figure is the genus, radius-measurement the differentia.

In the sciences which deal with life defining is sometimes less easy, the dividing-line is less readily apprehended. Huxley (*Lay Sermons*, ch. v.) thus defines the class Mammalia as "all animals which have a vertebrated skeleton and suckle their young." In ch. xii. he defines a horse as an animal having: "1. A vertebral column; 2. Mammæ; 3. A placental embryo; 4. Four legs; 5. A single well-developed toe in each foot provided with a hoof; 6. A bushy tail; 7. Callosities on the inner sides of both the fore and the hind legs."

In human affairs the difficulty of defining increases in proportion as we pass from the material to the spiritual, until at last definition—in any just sense—becomes an impossibility. We may readily define a “minor” to be “a person of either sex who has not attained the age at which full civil rights are accorded.” But to frame a legal definition of “property” is much less easy. To define “church,” *i. e.*, not the building, but the association of persons for religious purposes, is perhaps impossible. Catholics and Protestants would not agree, nor would any two Protestant denominations agree wholly. “Literature,” “eloquence,” “poetry,” are not to be defined.

The young reader need not hesitate to admit that he uses words which he is unable to define. These words are not always abstract terms; on the contrary, they may be quite concrete. Certainly the average boy would be puzzled were he unexpectedly called upon to define “knife,” “pencil,” “floor,” “room.” Still harder would he find “lesson,” “question,” “answer.”

How can the young learn to use terms? To this it may be answered that it is *the office of education in general*, and not of any one instructor alone, to teach the accurate use of terms. Every department of knowledge has its own terminology, and every student who masters the subject masters the terms, with or without formal definition. Thus, one who reads poetry diligently will acquire a sense of its significance, even although he will never be able to translate that significance into a definition.

A few practical suggestions may be helpful:

1. Consult dictionaries constantly, but remember that no dictionary is quite complete or perfect. Frequently the best part of a dictionary is in its *quotations* from good authors, illustrating the *shades of meaning* of a word.

2. In reading, note carefully whether the author uses the same word in different senses in different places. If he does, try to express the difference.

3. Consult teachers and other persons of experience, and get them to suggest an explanation or correct any misuse of a term.

4. In writing, attach a definite meaning to each term, and carefully avoid using it in any other sense in that composition.

50. Loose or Indirect Definition.—The sense of an indefinable term may be conveyed indirectly. Thus Swift defined style to be “proper words in their proper places.” Coleridge improved upon this:

The definition of good Prose is—proper words in their proper places; of good Verse—the most proper words in their proper places. The propriety is in either case relative. The words in prose ought to express the intended meaning, and no more; if they attract attention to themselves, it is in general a fault. . . . But in verse you must do more; there the words, the *media*, must be beautiful, and ought to attract your notice.—S. T. COLERIDGE: *Table Talk*, ii. 214.

Emerson characterized eloquence as “a taking sovereign possession of the audience;” De Quincey (*Works*, x. 92) wrote: “By eloquence we understand the outflow of powerful feelings upon occasions fitted to excite them.” (See also Webster, § 58.) Matthew Arnold (*Essays in Criticism*, p. 36) defined criticism to be “a disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world.” This does not distinguish criticism from learning, on the one hand, or from teaching, on the other. But it relieves criticism from the charge of being mere negative fault-finding, and shows it to be a positive and beneficial accomplishment.

CLASSIFICATION.

51. Under this head is included Division, and also Partition.

An understanding of the process of **Classification** may be got from its application in natural history:

I have hitherto spoken as if the lobster were alone in the world, but,

as I need hardly remind you, there are myriads of other animal organisms. Of these, some, such as men, horses, birds, fishes, snails, slugs, oysters, corals, and sponges, are not in the least like the lobster. But other animals, though they may differ a good deal from the lobster, are yet either very like it, or are like something that is like it. The cray-fish, the rock lobster, and the prawn, and the shrimp, for example, however different, are yet so like lobsters, that a child would group them as of the lobster kind, in contradistinction to snails and slugs; and these last again would form a kind by themselves, in contradistinction to cows, horses, and sheep, the cattle kind.

But this spontaneous grouping into "kinds" is the first essay of the human mind at classification, or the calling by a common name of those things that are alike, and the arranging them in such a manner as best to suggest the sum of their likenesses and unlikenesses to other things.

Those kinds which include no other subdivisions than the sexes, or various breeds, are called, in technical language, "species." The English lobster is a species, our cray-fish is another, our prawn is another. In other countries, however, there are lobsters, cray-fish, and prawns, very like ours, and yet presenting sufficient differences to deserve distinction. Naturalists, therefore, express this resemblance and this diversity by grouping them as distinct species of the same "genus." But the lobster and the cray-fish, though belonging to distinct genera, have many features in common, and hence are grouped together in an assemblage which is called a "family." More distant resemblances connect the lobster with the prawn and the crab, which are expressed by putting all these into the same "order." Again, more remote, but still very definite, resemblances unite the lobster with the wood-louse, the king-crab, the water-flea, and the barnacle, and separate them from all other animals; whence they collectively constitute the larger group or "class," *Crustacea*. But the *Crustacea* exhibit many peculiar features in common with insects, spiders, and centipedes, so that these are grouped into the still larger assemblage or "province" *Articulata*; and, finally, the relations which these have to worms and other lower animals are expressed by combining the whole vast aggregate into the "sub-kingdom" of *Annulosa*.—HUXLEY (vi.), p. 101.

In other words, we include all the common English lobsters in one *species*, the American lobsters in another species; all the species of lobster in the world we sum up in the *genus* Lobster; the genus lobster and the genus cray-fish we sum up in the *family* Homaridæ; this and kindred

families we sum up in the *order* Decapods; this and kindred orders we sum up in the *class* Crustacea; and so on until we reach the *sub-kingdom* of Annulosa.

Division is classification reversed. Thus we divide the animal kingdom into sub-kingdoms, each sub-kingdom into provinces, each province into classes, each class into orders, and so on until we reach the species. With species, classification and division proper end; we have only varieties and individuals left.

Partition is the breaking up of an individual into its component parts. Thus a horse may be partitioned (dissected) into its bony skeleton, muscles, internal organs, outward covering (hair), etc. The *species* "horse," *i. e.*, the ordinary domestic horse, is *classified* in one and the same *genus* with the ass and the zebra.

In loose popular language "divide" and "division" are very frequently used when "partition" is really meant. This is much to be regretted, but the habit can scarcely be overcome now. At all events, the young reader should learn to appreciate thoroughly the fundamental difference between partition and classification-division.

In science, biological or physical, the criteria for classifying and dividing are in nature itself; they may therefore be determined exactly and applied rigorously. In expounding them we must give them as we find them, without altering or abridging. Thus Tait, discussing the available sources of terrestrial energy, classifies them as:

First (potential). 1. Fuel (including wood, coal, zinc, for galvanic battery, etc.). 2. Food of animals. 3. Ordinary water-power. 4. Tidal water-power. *Second* (kinetic). 1. Winds. 2. Currents (ocean-currents). 3. Hot springs and volcanoes.

He then adds cautiously:

There are other very small sources known to us, exceedingly small; but these I have named include our principal resources.—TAIT: *Recent Advances*, vii. p. 160.

Having thus classified them, he proceeds to show that

almost all are to be traced back to solar radiation. The conclusion is that terrestrial energy, all but a very small part, is due to the rays of the sun.

52. Cross-Division.—In matters of human invention and in purely spiritual matters rigorous classification, like rigorous definition, becomes difficult and almost impossible. Thus the government of the United States is divided into three factors, legislative, executive, judicial; but, inasmuch as the chief executive, the President, has also, by virtue of his veto, a direct share in law-making, he must be classified—to that extent—with Congress. On the other hand, the Senate, through its right of rejecting presidential appointments, has a share in executing the law. Still further, the Senate and House, through the right of impeachment, are invested with judicial functions.

This overlapping of division-lines is technically called Cross-Division.

The tendency to cross-division exists in all classification which does not rest upon scientific criteria. The young reader can test this for himself. If he is a member of a large school, let him classify all the scholars. He may group them by *school* classes, in alphabetical or numerical order; he may group them according to sex, if the school is mixed; he may group them according to scholarship, into poor, fair, good; or into boarders and day-scholars. These several groupings would cross each other.

The reader can further test his ability to classify, by grouping the persons of his acquaintance, the books that he may see in a library, the studies that he may pursue.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

By general statement is here meant the setting forth of a general phenomenon, law, relation, or idea.

53. General Phenomenon.—A very good statement of one is this:

But sound, like light, may be reflected several times in succession, and as the reflected light under these circumstances becomes gradually feebler to the eye, so the successive echoes become gradually feebler to the ear. In mountain regions this repetition and decay of sound produces wonderful and pleasing effects. Visitors to Killarney will remember the fine echo in the Gap of Dunloe. When a trumpet is sounded at the proper place in the gap, the sonorous waves reach the ear in succession after one, two, three, or more reflections from the adjacent cliffs, and thus die away in the sweetest cadences. There is a deep *cul-de-sac*, called the Ochsenthal, formed by the great cliffs of the Engelhörner, near Rosenlauri, in Switzerland, where the echoes warble in a wonderful manner. The sound of the Alpine horn also rebounding from the rocks of the Wetterhorn or the Jungfrau, is in the first instance heard roughly. But by successive reflections, the notes are rendered more soft and flute-like, the gradual diminution of intensity giving the impression that the source of sound is retreating further and further into the solitudes of ice and snow.—TYNDALL. *Sound* (i.), p. 17.

A remarkable phenomenon of insect-life is this :

This remarkable instinct was first discovered in the *Formica* (*Polyerges*) *rufescens* by Pierre Huber, a better observer even than his celebrated father. This ant is absolutely dependent on its slaves ; without their aid, the species would certainly become extinct in a single year. The males and fertile females do no work of any kind, and the workers or sterile females, though most energetic and courageous in capturing slaves, do no other work. They are incapable of making their own nests, or of feeding their own larvæ. When the old nest is found inconvenient, and they have to migrate, it is the slaves which determine the migration, and actually carry their masters in their jaws. So utterly helpless are the masters, that when Huber shut up thirty of them without a slave, but with plenty of the food which they like best, and with their own larvæ and pupæ to stimulate them to work, they did nothing ; they could not even feed themselves, and many perished of hunger. Huber then introduced a single slave (*F. fusca*), and she instantly set to work, fed and saved the survivors ; made some cells and tended the larvæ, and put all to rights.—DARWIN: *Origin of Species*, ch. viii. p. 216.

The general phenomena of man's social and spiritual life are far more difficult to state fully and accurately. The difficulty is twofold. First, the facts and data upon

which to generalize are very hard to get. Second, we are apt to approach such questions in a spirit of prejudice.

The historian, for instance, is apt to sympathize with one of two conflicting parties in the past because of its resemblance, real or assumed, to his own party in the present. There is even a third source of error. In writing that is *literary* rather than scientific the writer is often desirous of writing *effectively*, as it is called. He seeks to produce by his manner a deep impression on the reader, and in so doing often overstates, sometimes even mis-states, his facts. The following presentation of literary Bohemia in the first half of the eighteenth century is an example :

As every climate has its peculiar diseases, so every walk of life has its peculiar temptations. The literary character, assuredly, has always had its share of faults: vanity, jealousy, morbid sensibility. To these faults were now superadded the faults which are commonly found in men whose livelihood is precarious, and whose principles are exposed to the trial of severe distress. All the vices of the gambler and of the beggar were blended with those of the author. The prizes in the wretched lottery of book-making were scarcely less ruinous than the blanks. If good fortune came, it came in such a manner that it was almost certain to be abused. After months of starvation and despair, a full third night or a well-received dedication filled the pocket of the lean, ragged, unwashed poet with guineas. He hastened to enjoy those luxuries with the images of which his mind had been haunted while he was sleeping amidst the cinders and eating potatoes at the Irish ordinary in Shoe Lane. A week of taverns soon qualified him for another year of night-cellar. Such was the life of Savage, of Boyse, and of a crowd of others. Sometimes blazing in gold-laced hats and waistcoats; sometimes lying in bed because their coats had gone to pieces, or wearing paper cravats because their linen was in pawn; sometimes drinking Champagne and Tokay with Betty Careless; sometimes standing at the window of an eating-house in Porridge Island, to sniff up the scent of what they could not afford to taste: they knew luxury; they knew beggary; but they never knew comfort.—MACAULAY: *Boswell's Johnson*.

There is undoubtedly much truth in the above. But every thoughtful student will suspect that it is also highly overwrought. Overstatement is, in fact, the prevalent

blemish in Macaulay's method. Matthew Arnold touches upon it lightly but firmly when he says :

I remember hearing Lord Macaulay say, after Wordsworth's death, when subscriptions were being collected to found a memorial of him, that ten years earlier more money could have been raised in Cambridge alone, to do honour to Wordsworth, than was now raised all through the country. Lord Macaulay had, as we know, his own heightened and telling way of putting things, and we must always make allowance for it.—MATTHEW ARNOLD: *Preface to Wordsworth's Poems*.

The ability to see clearly and state fairly is a matter of sober temperament and philosophic inquiry rather than of mere knowledge. The following passage illustrates Matthew Arnold's own method, in comparison with Macaulay's :

One of these [inconveniences] is, certainly in English public life, the prevalence of cries and catchwords, which are very apt to receive an application, or to be used with an absoluteness, which do not belong to them ; and then they tend to narrow our spirit and to hurt our practice. It is good to make a catchword of this sort come down from its stronghold of commonplace, to force it to move about before us in the open country, and to show us its real strength. Such a catchword as this: *The state had better leave things alone*. One constantly hears that as an absolute maxim ; now, as an absolute maxim, it has really no force at all. The absolute maxims are those which carry to man's spirit their own demonstration with them ; such propositions as: *Duty is the law of life* ; *Man is morally free*, and so on. The proposition: *The state had better leave things alone*, carries no such demonstration with it ; it has, therefore, no absolute force ; it merely conveys a notion which certain people have generalized from certain facts which have come under their observation, and which, by a natural vice of the human mind, they are then prone to apply absolutely. Some things the state had better leave alone, others it had better not. Is this particular thing one of these, or one of those?—that, as to any particular thing, is the right question.—MATTHEW ARNOLD: *A French Eton*, p. 472.

See also *A priori*, § 74.

The following is in a lighter vein :

At almost every step in life we meet with young men . . . for whom we anticipate wonderful things, but of whom, even after much and careful inquiry, we never happen to hear another word. The effervescence

of youth and passion, and the fresh glows of the intellect and imagination, endow them with a false brilliancy which makes fools of themselves and other people. Like certain chintzes, calicoes, and gingham, they show finely in their first newness, but cannot stand the sun and rain, and assume a very sober aspect after washing-day.—HAWTHORNE: *Seven Gables*, ch. xii.

54. Expository Description.—Attention was called in § 47 to generalized description. The generalizing process may be carried to such length that the composition ceases to be description, and becomes exposition. Irving's paper entitled "John Bull," in the *Sketch-Book*, is an instance. The following passage will suffice for illustration :

John Bull, to all appearance, is a plain, downright, matter-of-fact fellow, with much less of poetry about him than rich prose. There is little of romance in his nature, but a vast deal of strong natural feeling. He excels in humor more than in wit ; is jolly rather than gay ; melancholy rather than morose ; can easily be moved to a sudden tear, or surprised into a broad laugh ; but he loathes sentiment, and has no turn for light pleasantry. He is a boon-companion, if you allow him to have his humor and to talk about himself, and he will stand by a friend in a quarrel with life and purse, however soundly he may be cudgelled.—IRVING: *John Bull*.

A comparison of the above with the descriptions of Queen Elizabeth (§ 38) and Master Simon (§ 12) will make the difference felt. The difference between John Bull and the generalized description of the Punch-dinner (§ 47) is less obvious, but is nevertheless real. The writer of the Punch-dinner is trying to describe *one* place and *one* set of persons, but he makes his description applicable to more than one occasion ; whereas Irving's John Bull is not intended to be the portrait of any one Englishman, or even to be applicable directly to any one, but is the *generalization* of all that Irving read and observed of English character. It is like a composite photograph.

55. General Law.—The process of expounding a general law is illustrated by Tait's statement, based upon Newton's *Principia*, of the law of gravitation :

Every particle of matter in the universe attracts every other particle with a force whose direction is that of the line joining the two, and whose magnitude is directly as the product of their masses, and inversely as the square of their distance from each other.—TAIT: *Prop. of Matter* (vii.), p. 110.

The phenomenon is thus *measurable*, directly according to mass, inversely according to distance.

A law of biological science—viz. the measurable circulation of the blood—is thus stated:

The friction in the minute arteries and capillaries [connecting the arteries with the veins] presents a considerable resistance to the flow of blood through them into the small veins. In consequence of this resistance, the force of the heart's beat is spent in maintaining the whole of the arterial system in a state of great distention; the arterial walls are put greatly on the stretch by the pressure of the blood thrust into them by the repeated strokes of the heart; this is the pressure which we spoke of above as blood-pressure. The greatly distended arterial system is, by the elastic reaction of its elastic walls, continually tending to empty itself by overflowing through the capillaries into the venous system; and it overflows at such a rate, that *just as much blood passes from the arteries to the veins during each systole and its succeeding diastole as enters the aorta at each systole*.—FOSTER: *Physiology*, ch. iv. § 119.

56. In human affairs—politics, history, ethics, literature, etc.—it is far more difficult to formulate general laws. Much, indeed, that is popularly called “law” is in strictness no law at all, but merely the statement of a phenomenon that occurs frequently, perhaps usually, but not invariably. Thus, not a few of the laws of political economy are nothing more than statements of general tendencies. They operate “in the long run,” but not in every single case. Therefore we cannot count upon them as we count upon the law of gravitation. *E. g.*, men usually buy where they can buy cheapest; but there are exceptions; one man may have certain prejudices or habits which lead him to one shop rather than another.

The “laws” that we read in our statute-books are not laws, but statutes, *i. e.*, the expression of the will of the

people through its legislature. And, like every other expression of will, they can be recalled, *i. e.*, repealed. *E. g.*, the Silver Bill was merely the will of Congress that so much silver should be bought every year by the Treasury. When repealed in 1893, it ceased to be the national will.

Many of the so-called laws in historical writings are only hasty and untrustworthy generalizations; *e. g.*, the following:

Thierry, in his "History of the Gauls," observes, in contrasting the Gaulish and Germanic races, that the first is characterized by the instinct of intelligence and mobility, and by the preponderant action of individuals; the second, by the instinct of discipline and order, and by the preponderant action of bodies of men.—MATTHEW ARNOLD: *A French Eton*, p. 481.

Even were the above true, it would scarcely be a law, but rather a general phenomenon. Besides, our knowledge of the Gaulish race is altogether too meagre for such sweeping induction.

The popular belief in self-betrayal, "murder will out" (see § 69), is set forth by Webster in one of his great imaginative efforts:

Meantime the guilty soul cannot keep its own secret. It is false to itself; or rather it feels an irresistible impulse of conscience to be true to itself. It labors under its guilty possession, and knows not what to do with it. The human heart was not made for the residence of such an inhabitant. It finds itself preyed on by a torment which it dares not acknowledge to God or man. A vulture is devouring it, and it can ask no sympathy or assistance, either from heaven or earth. The secret which the murderer possesses soon comes to possess him; and, like the evil spirits of which we read, it overcomes him, and leads him whithersoever it will. He feels it beating at his heart, rising to his throat, and demanding disclosure. He thinks the whole world sees it in his face, reads it in his eyes, and almost hears its workings in the very silence of his thoughts. It has become his master. It betrays his discretion, it breaks down his courage, it conquers his prudence. When suspicions from without begin to embarrass him, and the net of circumstances to entangle him, the fatal secret struggles with still greater violence to burst forth. It must be confessed, it will be confessed; there is no ref-

uge from confession but suicide, and suicide is confession.—WEBSTER: *Murder of White*.

The following statement of the fundamental law of civil society, although somewhat abstruse, deserves attention :

If civil society be the offspring of convention, that convention must be its law. That convention must limit and modify all the descriptions of constitution which are formed under it. Every sort of legislative, judicial, or executory power are its creatures. They can have no being in any other state of things; and how can any man claim, under the conventions of civil society, rights which do not so much as suppose its existence? Rights which are absolutely repugnant to it? One of the first motives to civil society, and which becomes one of its fundamental rules, is, *that no man should be judge in his own cause*. By this each person has at once divested himself of the first fundamental right of an uncovenanted man, that is, to judge for himself, and to assert his own cause. He abdicates all right to be his own governor. He inclusively, in a great measure, abandons the right of self-defence, the first law of nature. Man cannot enjoy the rights of an uncivil and of a civil state together. That he may obtain justice, he gives up his right of determining what it is in points the most essential to him. That he may secure some liberty, he makes a surrender in trust of the whole of it.—BURKE: *Reflections*, p. 65.

57. General Relation.—By relation is meant here the connection between two things, the influence exerted by one upon the other.

Thus, we may speak of the relation between the United States and England, and this relation we may discuss in its bearing upon politics, trade, literature, science, religion, etc. Again, we may discuss the general relation between man and wife, between parent and child; or the relation between the citizen and the State, or between man and his Creator.

The most general relation is that of *cause and effect*. It exists both in nature and in human society, and when demonstrated in nature it is susceptible of strict scientific exposition. *E. g.*, Tyndall explains the blue of the atmosphere to be caused by the reflection of light from extremely minute particles:

Small in mass, the vastness in point of number of the particles of our sky may be inferred from the continuity of its light. It is not in broken patches, nor at scattered points that the heavenly azure is revealed. To the observer on the summit of Mont Blanc the blue is as uniform and coherent as if it formed the surface of the most close-grained solid. A marble dome would not exhibit a stricter continuity. . . . Everywhere through the atmosphere those sky-particles are strewn. They fill the Alpine valleys, spreading like a delicate gauze in front of the slopes of pine. They sometimes so swathe the peaks with light as to abolish their definition. This year I have seen the Weisshorn thus dissolved in opalescent air. By proper instruments the glare thrown from the sky-particles against the retina may be quenched, and then the mountain which it obliterated starts into sudden definition. Its extinction in front of a dark mountain resembles exactly the withdrawal of a veil. It is the light then taking possession of the eye, and not the particles acting as opaque bodies, that interferes with the definition. By day this light quenches the stars; even by moonlight it is able to exclude from vision all stars between the fifth and the eleventh magnitude. It may be likened to a noise, and the stellar radiance to a whisper drowned by the noise.—TYNDALL: *Fragments* (vii.), p. 149.

A causal relation in human affairs is less easy to expound. Occasionally, but not often, we may discern a cause without apparent effect. More commonly we are puzzled by an effect without assignable cause. Even where we plainly discern both cause and effect, we may fail to state the *ratio* very exactly; *e. g.*, there is, beyond doubt, a connection between poverty and crime, but this relation cannot be formulated as exactly as the corresponding relation between bad food and certain kinds of disease.

For a specimen of effect without assignable cause the reader may study Webster's speech in the celebrated Keniston case. One Major Goodridge alleged that he had been attacked and wounded and robbed of a large sum of money while travelling at night, and charged the Keniston brothers and some other men with the crime. Webster defended successfully his clients by his sharp cross-examination of Goodridge, in which he involved the latter

in many contradictions. In his speech to the jury he touched upon the absence of motive:

But, on the threshold of the inquiry, every one puts the question, What motive had the prosecutor to be guilty of the abominable conduct of feigning a robbery? It is difficult to assign motives. The jury do not know enough of his character or circumstances. Such things have happened, and may happen again. Suppose he owed money in Boston, and had it not to pay? Who knows how high he might estimate the value of a plausible apology? Some men have also a whimsical ambition of distinction. There is no end to the variety of modes in which human vanity exhibits itself. A story of this nature excites the public sympathy. It attracts general attention. It causes the name of the prosecutor to be celebrated as a man who has been attacked, and, after a manly resistance, overcome by robbers, and who has renewed his resistance as soon as returning life and sensation enabled him, and, after a second conflict, has been quite subdued, beaten and bruised out of all sense and sensation, and finally left for dead on the field. It is not easy to say how far such motives, trifling and ridiculous as most men would think them, might influence the prosecutor, when connected with any expectation of favor or indulgence, if he wanted such, from his creditors.—WEBSTER: *Defence of Kennistons*.

It may be observed that had Webster been trying to convict Goodridge; instead of trying to acquit his clients, he would undoubtedly have failed.

It will be noticed that Webster uses the word "motive." This is the correct designation of those impulses which urge a person to the doing of an act.

The word "instrument" or "agency" is used to designate the person or thing by means of which a result is produced. A railroad, *e. g.*, is an instrument or means of communication. In writing upon the benefits of railroads we undertake to state the good results that come from using them. We may in like manner state the benefits of the telegraph, of the telephone, etc.

58. General Idea.—The word "idea," as here used, includes not only mental impressions (ideas proper), but also mental states and qualities and powers, which cannot be strictly classified and defined.

E. g., memory, as a faculty of the mind, can be defined by the psychologist. But mercy is not susceptible of definition. Yet that it can be successfully expounded is evidenced by Portia's speech, *Merchant of Venice*, iv. sc. 1.

Two definitions, loose and indirect, of eloquence have been given (§ 50). The following is Webster's well-known indirect exposition of it:

When public bodies are to be addressed on momentous occasions, when great interests are at stake, and strong passions excited, nothing is valuable in speech farther than as it is connected with high intellectual and moral endowments. Clearness, force, and earnestness are the qualities which produce conviction. True eloquence, indeed, does not consist in speech. It cannot be brought from far. Labor and learning may toil for it, but they will toil in vain. Words and phrases may be marshalled in every way, but they cannot compass it. It must exist in the man, in the subject, and in the occasion. Affected passion, intense expression, the pomp of declamation, all may aspire to it; they cannot reach it. It comes, if it comes at all, like the outbreking of a fountain from the earth, or the bursting forth of volcanic fires, with spontaneous, original, native force. The graces taught in the schools, the costly ornaments and studied contrivances of speech, shock and disgust men, when their own lives, and the fate of their wives, their children, and their country, hang on the decision of the hour. Then words have lost their power, rhetoric is vain, and all elaborate oratory contemptible. Even genius itself then feels rebuked and subdued, as in the presence of higher qualities. Then patriotism is eloquent; then self-devotion is eloquent. The clear conception, outrunning the deductions of logic, the high purpose, the firm resolve, the dauntless spirit, speaking on the tongue, beaming from the eye, informing every feature, and urging the whole man onward, right onward to his object,—this, this is eloquence; or rather, it is something greater and higher than all eloquence,—it is action, noble, sublime, godlike action.—WEBSTER: *Adams and Jefferson*.

All such definition and exposition, when examined, will be found to consist either in stating what the idea is *not*, or in enumerating the *effects* produced by an indefinable force, or in using an illustrative *parallel* (analogy). By means of analogy Emerson defines the orator, saying of him that he plays upon his audience *as a musician plays*

upon the keys of a piano. St. Paul expounds charity negatively :

Charity suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.—1 Cor. xiii. 4.

59. Mixed Exposition.—Nearly all expository writing may be put under one or the other of the three heads, Definition, Classification, and General Statement, although the dividing-lines are not always to be sharply drawn. Occasionally we meet with a passage that seems too composite to be put under any one head; *e. g.*, the passage from Darwin (§ 21). Here the author begins by sketching in the most general way a bit of animated nature. This is partly generalized description, partly the exposition of a group of phenomena. Then follow the laws which account for the phenomena. At last, the moral emotions evoked by the sight of varying life under unvarying laws.

The numerous experiments mentioned in works of science are, in the main, tests or arguments to prove or disprove certain views. Yet they are also expositions of the phenomena under examination. Furthermore, by giving each step in the experiment in chronological order they assume the form of narration.

POPULAR EXPOSITION—THE ESSAY.

60. Thus far Exposition has been taken in its strict sense. But the term is also used in a loose popular sense to designate that mode of writing in which the writer undertakes to give a summary of his views upon a matter of public interest. In this sense an exposition is practically an Essay; *e. g.*, Macaulay's essays on the *Civil Disabilities of the Jews*, on *Mill*, on *Bentham*, on the *Utilitarian Theory of Government*. These essays just named are a mixture of exposition and argument. The essay on *Lord Bacon* is in part biography, in part an exposition of Ba-

con's doctrines. The essay on *Chatham* is for the most part biographical and historical narrative and description, but with some exposition.

The young reader should not let himself be confused by mere words. Thus Tyndall denominated one of his books, *Fragments of Science*, a "series of detached *essays*, lectures, and reviews." He used the word here in its *original* sense of a *trial or attempt*, and meant thereby that he was trying to give the reader a brief expository outline of the doctrines of physical science. On examination, the book is found to be scientific exposition pure and simple, but adapted to the unprofessional reader.

An essay by Macaulay and one by Tyndall are thus quite different in substance; but in form they are alike to the extent that they are both short popular attempts, rather than complete treatises. Essays of the Macaulay kind may be called, by way of distinction, literary essays.

61. The varieties of Literary Essay are too numerous and too heterogeneous for systematic treatment. Only a few of the most striking can be mentioned here.

The **Conversational or Personal Essay** is a rambling discourse upon men and books and events. It has no principle of unity other than the individuality of the writer. If that is sufficiently important and attractive, we are glad to put ourselves under its influence. For the influence of any strong character helps to form our own character, independently of any positive knowledge we may gain by the way.

The writings of Montaigne are often cited as examples of the personal essay. Many of the "Spectator" papers are in this line; they introduce the personality of Addison or Steele, giving the writer's polite jest at the foibles and follies of society. Many of De Quincey's writings, also, are personal essays. They acquaint us with his physical and mental traits, with his opinions, his estimates of his friends, and theirs of him. In fact, De Quin-

cey found it impossible to exclude himself wholly from anything that he wrote, even from such didactic or critical writings as those upon *Rhetoric* and *Style*.

The **Didactic Essay** is an attempt to treat in a popular manner some question of popular interest, *e. g.*, in finance, politics, public morals, jurisprudence, without obtruding the writer's personality. It is substantially exposition, but exposition unsystematic and suited to the comprehension of the unsystematic reader. Most of the magazine and review articles of the present time are of this kind. They are necessarily sketchy, raising many questions, perhaps, but answering only a few, and in general stimulating the reader's curiosity rather than satisfying his desire for knowledge.

The **Critical Essay** is an attempt to apply the canons of art to recent productions, and to inform thereby the reader as to their merits. Much valuable literature has come to us in this shape. Thus Lessing's *Hamburg Dramaturgie*, which began as a series of semi-weekly criticisms upon the plays and actors of the Hamburg stage, soon developed into the most suggestive exposition of dramatic art in general. Matthew Arnold's papers, *On Translating Homer*, while they dealt nominally with the insufficiencies of certain translators, old and new, of Homer, in reality developed a theory of the literary value of Homeric poetry. But usually the critical essay, like the didactic, is too short and too unsystematic to give wholly satisfying information.

CHAPTER VIII.

ARGUMENTATION.

62. ARGUMENTATION is the most difficult kind of composition. It is, in fact, too difficult for the young and immature. To deal with it profitably, one should be familiar with the general principles of Logic, *i. e.*, with the Syllogism, the relation of Cause and Effect, Analogy, the nature of Evidence, the processes of Induction and Deduction. At least all these branches are involved in the study of the general *theory* of argumentation, although in actual life each profession makes especial use of one branch, so that the individual member of the profession acquires technical facility in the use of the methods peculiar to it. Thus the lawyer, as lawyer, is trained in the (Court) rules of Evidence, see § 70; his argumentation is chiefly in the line of Analogy, or of deduction from Definitions, see §§ 72, 73. The mathematician uses almost exclusively the process of Deduction from Definitions and Axioms, see § 69. The scientist uses Induction and Deduction, see § 68.

In the present work nothing is attempted beyond indicating briefly the various classes of arguments, their respective values, and the uses to which they may be put. Enough is given to enable the young reader to follow a line of argumentation and estimate approximately its force and its weakness.

GENERAL FEATURES.

63. Argumentation is an attempt to prove or disprove a proposition. By proposition is meant an assertion which is or may be drawn up in the form: A. is B., *e. g.*, "Every

man is the architect of his own fortune;" "Men are responsible for their opinions;" "N. owes M. \$5000 on a promissory note;" "N. is guilty of the crime of having murdered M."

Each of the above propositions is an assertion to be established. The means by which it is established are called Arguments or Proofs. In legal proceedings the term proof is used to designate the testimony of witnesses, documents (such as wills or deeds), and other matters of fact; while the term argument is restricted to the inferences drawn from such data by the advocate (lawyer) on one side or the other. But in non-legal reasoning this distinction is not observed. Any fact, any form of words, used to establish a proposition, may be called indiscriminately a proof or an argument. The verb "to prove" is used without distinction. In formal logic (and mathematics) the proving of a proposition beyond the possibility of doubt is called a Demonstration.

For practical purposes we may classify arguments according to the principle of Certainty and Probability, or according to the principle of General and Particular. The classes cross each other, see §§ 52, 67.

CERTAINTY AND PROBABILITY.

64. The first step in understanding argumentation is to learn the difference between an argument which establishes the proposition with certainty, and one which establishes it only to a varying degree of probability. The difference is that between science on the one hand, and the great body of historical, political, and legal reasoning on the other. The term Certainty is used here in two senses:

a. Absolute certainty, the opposite of which is inconceivable, *e. g.*, in mathematics, the demonstration that the angles at the base of an isosceles triangle are equal.

b. In physical and biological science, that practical certainty which is obtained through repeated induction and

deduction and tested by repeated experiments until it becomes an unquestioned rule.

The difference between scientific argumentation and literary (or legal) is illustrated by the following quotations:

If beautiful objects had been created solely for man's gratification, it ought to be shown that before man appeared there was less beauty on the face of the earth than since he came on the stage. Were the beautiful volute and cone shells of the Eocene epoch, and the gracefully sculptured ammonites of the Secondary period, created that man might ages afterwards admire them in his cabinet? Few objects are more beautiful than the minute siliceous cases of the diatomaceæ; were these created that they might be examined and admired under the higher powers of the microscope? The beauty in this latter case, and in many others, is apparently wholly due to symmetry of growth.—DARWIN: *Origin of Species*, ch. vi.

Darwin's argument that beauty of form existed prior to, and therefore independent of, the creation of man is apparently unanswerable. In the rest of the paragraph he discusses in like manner beauty of color.

One of the proofs that radiant heat and radiant light are the same thing, or only variations of the same thing, is thus given:

The radiant heat from the sun goes along with the light from the sun, and when you shut one off,—put a screen so as to intercept the one,—the other is intercepted at the same time. In the case of a solar eclipse, you have the sun's heat as long as you see the smallest portion of the sun's disc. The instant the last portion of the disc is obscured, the heat disappears with the light. That shows that the heat and light take not only the same course, but also the same time to come to us. If the one lagged ever so little behind the other,—if the heat disappeared sooner than the light, or the light sooner than the heat,—it would show that though they both moved in straight lines, the one moved faster than the other; but the result of observation is that we find, so far as our most delicate measurements show, that heat and light are simultaneously intercepted.—TAIT: *Recent Advances*, ch. viii.

The above may be contrasted with Macaulay's attempt to prove that Sir Philip Francis was the author of the "Junius" letters:

Was he the author of the "Letters of Junius"? Our own firm belief is that he was. The evidence is, we think, such as would support a verdict in a civil, nay, in a criminal proceeding. The handwriting of Junius is the very peculiar handwriting of Francis, slightly disguised. As to the position, pursuits, and connections of Junius, the following are the most important facts which can be considered as clearly proved: first, that he was acquainted with the technical forms of the Secretary of State's office; secondly, that he was intimately acquainted with the business of the War-office; thirdly, that he, during the year 1770, attended debates in the House of Lords, and took notes of speeches, particularly of the speeches of Lord Chatham; fourthly, that he bitterly resented the appointment of Mr. Chamier to the place of Deputy Secretary at War; fifthly, that he was bound by some strong tie to the first Lord Holland. Now, Francis passed some years in the Secretary of State's office. He was subsequently chief clerk of the War-office. He repeatedly mentioned that he had himself, in 1770, heard speeches of Lord Chatham; and some of these speeches were actually printed from his notes. He resigned his clerkship at the War-office from resentment at the appointment of Mr. Chamier. It was by Lord Holland that he was first introduced into the public service. Now, here are five marks, all of which ought to be found in Junius. They are all five found in Francis. We do not believe that more than two of them can be found in any other person whatever. If this argument does not settle the question, there is an end of all reasoning on circumstantial evidence.—MACAULAY: *Warren Hastings*.

So far from settling the question, Macaulay left it where he found it; perhaps he rather obscured than illuminated it, see § 75. Certainly the drift of present opinion is against identifying Francis with Junius.*

65. Without going into the remote field of history, we may contrast (practical) certainty with mere probability (of a high order) by a slight every-day test. If we observe plants, *e. g.*, potato-vines or tomatoes, growing in straight lines that cross each other at regular intervals, we infer that they have been planted there by human agency, and we could not seriously entertain any other explanation. But when we observe the flag flying over the Capitol at

* See London *Athenæum*, Aug. 11, 25, Sept. 8, 1888; Dec. 14, 1889; June 28, Aug. 9, 1890; Jan. 24, 1891; March 17, 24, 1894.

Washington and infer that Congress is in session, our inference is not certain, but only highly probable. The connection between the sitting of Congress and the flying of the flag is merely a variable human custom. It is always possible that the flag-keeper may have run up the flag through mistake, or may have forgotten to lower it after adjournment. Or perhaps the flag is flying in honor of some national holiday.

Huxley, one of the acutest of reasoners, has expressed himself in a paragraph which has been much quoted and sometimes misunderstood :

So, the vast results obtained by Science are won by no mystical faculties, by no mental processes other than those which are practised by every one of us in the humblest and meanest affairs of life. A detective policeman discovers a burglar from the marks made by his shoe, by a mental process identical with that by which Cuvier restored the extinct animals of Montmartre from fragments of their bones. Nor does that process of induction and deduction by which a lady, finding a stain of a peculiar kind upon her dress, concludes that somebody has upset the inkstand thereon, differ in any way, in kind, from that by which Adams and Leverrier discovered a new planet.—HUXLEY (v.), p. 78.

This is truth, but not the whole truth. Huxley's chief motive was to strip induction and deduction of the mystery in which they had been wrapped, and make it clear that scientific brains do not differ essentially from ordinary brains. Yet there is a line of division between Cuvier and the detective, between the lady with the stained dress and Adams and Leverrier. Cuvier inferred from the osseous structure of the Montmartre fragments that the fossil animal to which they belonged must have had a skeleton of a certain type. But the detective who fits a peculiar shoe into a peculiar foot-print merely fastens suspicion on the owner of the shoe. It is quite possible that the shoe may have been worn by some one else ; a link is thus wanting in the chain of evidence. The lady guesses, with off-hand plausibility, that the stain on her dress has been made by ink ; to prove that it is ink, she must resort

to microscopic or chemical analysis. Adams and Leverrier proved the existence of Neptune as the only possibility of reconciling the aberrations of Uranus with the law of gravitation.

66. This question of certainty and probability is not speculative, it has great practical value. Trials at law, involving the property, reputation, and even the lives of men and women, are decided by proofs which are not in themselves perfectly conclusive, but only probable. The direct testimony of witnesses may be erroneous or false; circumstantial evidence, apparently conclusive, may have more than one flaw. Not even the so-called confession of an accused person is perfectly conclusive: instances have occurred in which an innocent person has incriminated himself for peculiar reasons. It is precisely because of this element of uncertainty that law-trials exhibit such perplexities. For instance, in the celebrated Kenniston case, see § 57, the Kennistons would probably have been convicted but for Webster's ingenuity in cross-examining the principal witness, Goodrich. The evidence against them seemed so strong that several lawyers declined to undertake the defence. Webster was induced to undertake it only at the last moment, and in response to a strong personal appeal.

Matters of legislation and finance also rest upon arguments that are far from conclusive. The utmost that can be said in favor of certain proposed measures is that they will probably work well in one country because they have worked fairly well in another. But until they have been actually tested for a number of years we cannot be sure.

GENERAL AND PARTICULAR.

67. In argumentation we may start from a general and infer a particular; conversely, we may start from one or more particulars and infer a general. Thus, in the cases given in the beginning of § 65, we start from a particular

phenomenon (peculiar form of growth, flag flying) and infer a general cause (human agency), or an antecedent general condition (Congress in session). On the other hand, when we observe the thermometer at zero we know that the temperature is very low, and we infer from this low temperature (as a cause) that standing water must be freezing (particular phenomenon). If, at the trial of A. for the murder of B., witnesses testify that A. had frequently expressed intense hatred of B., we infer from this hatred (as a motive) the probability, greater or less, that he may have committed the murder (particular act). In criminal trials it is usually needful to establish some motive or inducement for committing the offence in question, *e. g.*, jealousy, revenge, desire of money, etc. This necessity is due to the popular assumption, see § 69, that a man does not commit a crime without some special motive. Proving the existence of the motive does not directly prove the accused to be guilty, but merely removes the improbability arising from the absence of all motive. See remarks on Webster's defence of the Kennistons, § 57.

Observe how these four simple cases exemplify the statement (end of § 63) that the two methods of classification cross each other.

It is believed that this presentation of arguments according to the principle of Certainty-Probability and General-Particular will be more intelligible to the young student than the usual classification, *viz.*, Antecedent Probability, Sign, and Example. Antecedent Probability corresponds in the main to the inference from general to particular; Sign, to the inference from particular to general. Example will be treated later, in connection with Analogy, §§ 71, 73.

A few terms, frequently used in argumentation, need separate explanation.

INDUCTION—DEDUCTION.

68. Induction is, loosely speaking, the process of inferring a general from particulars. But in science the term is employed in a very restricted sense. We speak of scientific induction only when the inference amounts to a general law, or a general cause; perhaps also when the inference amounts to what may be called an empiric general fact. Thus, the law of gravitation, quoted in § 55, is an induction of the highest order. When we see streams and ponds frozen, we infer that the temperature has been below 32°. By **Empiric Fact** is meant that two phenomena are always found associated, so that when we see one we expect to see the other, although no direct causal relation between the two has been established. Thus, in zoology, the presence of occipital condyles is uniformly associated with the presence of mammæ and warm red blood, and this general fact is treated as a quasi induction. Hence, when the remains of a new animal are discovered, exhibiting such condyles, the zoologist infers, by deduction, that the animal belonged to the class Mammalia.

Deduction is the converse of induction. Given a law, or a cause, we infer particular phenomena previously unknown. Thus Franklin, having proved by induction that electricity and lightning are identical, made the deduction that lightning might be diverted from buildings by using a metal rod. Newton, having established the law of gravity (§ 55), made the deduction that the attractive force exerted by a sphere equal to the earth in size upon a body outside of it is the same as if the whole mass of the earth were contracted to a point at its centre. That is, the centre of the earth is the starting-point from which to measure.

Our confidence in scientific inductions and deductions rests in our ability to verify them by repeated experiments. Newton's law of gravity is put to a practical test every day

in every astronomical calculation. His deduction relating to the centre of the earth was tested by numerous observations upon the movements of the moon. Every lightning-rod is a verification of Franklin's deduction.

But deductions from empiric facts are never quite certain in the strictest scientific sense. Fresh discoveries may reveal exceptions. Thus, until 1824, it was supposed that the circulation of the blood was always in one definite and invariable direction :

But in that year M. Von Hasselt, happening to examine a transparent animal of the class of Ascidians, found to his infinite surprise that after the heart had beat a certain number of times it stopped and then began beating the opposite way, so as to reverse the course of the current, which returned by and by to its original direction.—HUXLEY (v.), p. 86.

Another empiric fact is the absence of teeth in birds. This is so constant that until 1872 it was supposed that teeth and feathers never occurred in the same animal. A naturalist, discovering remains of an unknown animal with teeth, would have inferred, prior to 1872, that it could not belong to the class of birds. But in that year Prof. O. C. Marsh discovered in Western Kansas fossil remains of birds with clearly defined teeth, and proposed to constitute them as a sub-class, the Aves Dentatæ or Odon-tornithes, in three distinct orders.

A further empiric fact, which now promises perhaps to become a genuine induction, is the connection between the Aurora Borealis, magnetic storms, sun-spots, and the movements of Jupiter, Saturn, Venus, and Mars.

ASSUMPTION.

69. Much, perhaps the greater part, of argumentation rests ultimately upon assumption. In its highest form an assumption is called an *axiom*, *i. e.*, a self-evident proposition; *e. g.*, that two things equal to the same thing are

equal to each other, that the whole is greater than a part, that matter is indestructible.

Many of the assumptions that we hear in every-day life are the expression of the common experience of men, and vary greatly in their probability. Thus, the proposition that all men are mortal, or the proposition that every man is a mixture of good and bad, that every man is liable to err, etc. Such assumptions are usually called *maxims*. But the popular belief that "murder will out" (see § 56) is scarcely a maxim.

It is interesting to study the history of one great political assumption. The opening sentence of Lincoln's Gettysburg address runs thus :

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

The assertion of the Declaration of Independence, that all men were created free and equal, was certainly a much debated proposition until the great war of 1860-65. But now, for American affairs at least, it is a political and legal axiom. Yet, for many other parts of the world, notably Africa and some of the East Indies, it is still an open question.

Our belief in what we read in books and newspapers is largely an assumption that the writers are truthful and know what they write of. Were we to demand proof of everything that we read, we should come to a stand-still.

In law there are various assumptions, sometimes called *presumptions*, *e. g.*, the rule that a child under seven years of age is incapable of committing crime. This particular presumption is denominated "conclusive," *i. e.*, it does not admit of any argument to the contrary. But the presumption that a man accused of crime is innocent until proved guilty is not at all conclusive. It merely amounts to saying that the burden of proof rests upon the prosecution.

In popular speech presumption is used loosely to disig-

nate an indeterminate amount of probability or improbability, *e. g.*, the presumption that snow will fall in New York in winter, but not in New Orleans. In general there is always a presumption against what is not. Thus, until 1866, there was a presumption against the successful laying of an Atlantic cable. Much later there was a like presumption against talking by electricity (telephone). There is still a presumption against flying machines.

One legal assumption, or presumption, calls for especial study—viz. the law of Testimony.

TESTIMONY AND AUTHORITY.

70. Testimony is usually classified as an argument from a "sign" (see end of § 67). This view is not philosophical, it fails to discriminate between a statement and our acceptance of it. *If* we believe what a certain witness says, we accept his statement as a fact, it is to us a fact, as if we ourselves had seen with our own eyes and heard with our own ears. And this fact is usually a sign, *i. e.*, an individual fact from which and similar facts we infer a cause or motive. But *why* do we accept the statement as true? No theory of the "sign" will give an answer. To find one we must *assume* that men in general tell the truth, and that this individual witness is peculiarly qualified to tell the truth. Without such assumption there can be no testimony. In fact, society itself, we may boldly say, could not subsist without truth-telling; a community of liars would go to pieces.

But as testimony rests upon assumption, we are always free to reject it for valid reasons, *i. e.*, we may show that the witness was imperfectly informed, or inaccurate, or even untruthful.

The special qualifications of a witness may be summed up under two heads:

- a. His ability to observe accurately.
- b. His disposition to tell truly.

These two qualifications are tested :

a. By cross-examining him.

b. By comparing his statements with those of other witnesses.

Cross-examination proper is possible only in a law-trial. After the witness has testified, in *direct examination*, in answer to questions put to him by counsel for the side that has summoned him, the counsel for the other side *cross-examines* him. That is, the adverse counsel plies him with questions likely to bring out every defect or inaccuracy in his statements, or to lead him to contradict himself.

The following is from the trial of Lord Gordon for treason, 1781. The principal witness against the accused was William Hay, who professed to give a full and true account of the rioting in the streets of London. When cross-examined by Mr. Kenyon, Hay involved himself in numerous contradictions and absurdities. Thus :

Q. How do you know it was the same person you saw in the fields? Were you acquainted with him?

A. No.

Q. How, then?

A. Why, he looked like a brewer's servant.

Q. What, were they not all in their Sunday clothes? [A previous statement by the witness.]

A. Oh! yes, they were all in their Sunday clothes.

Q. Was this man with the flag then alone in the dress of his trade?

A. No.

Q. Then how do you know he was a brewer's servant?—After a long pause, in which the witness seemed to be on the point of running out of court—

A. Because there was something particular in the cut of his coat, the cut of his breeches, and the cut of his stockings.—BAKER: *Argumentation*, p. 115.

In addressing the jury Lord Erskine quoted this remarkable break-down, with the caustic comment: "Gentlemen, you will not, I am sure, forget, whenever you see a man about whose apparel there is anything particular, to set him down for a *brewer's servant*."

In a debated question of history, which may turn upon the accuracy of a statement written by some person long since dead, cross-examination is impossible. The student can only examine the statement minutely, to see if it is consistent with itself at all points, and compare it with the generally accepted data of history. We must admit, once for all, that the sifting of historical evidence is extremely difficult, and that many of its problems will remain unsolved. The present tendency is to reject all tradition and to accept only the recorded statements of persons contemporary with the events.

The general credibility of a witness is enhanced by various circumstances, *e. g.* :

a. In a law-suit, by the gravity of the occasion, and by the taking of a solemn oath, with heavy penalties attached.

b. By reputation in the community at large for intelligence and honesty.

c. By the concurrent testimony of other witnesses.

d. By stating something contrary to his own interests.

Authority.—Usually a witness testifies only to matters of fact, *i. e.*, to what he has seen or heard. But occasionally, even in law-suits, he is called upon for his opinion, *e. g.*, in suits for infringement of patent-rights, in trials for murder by poisoning, etc. Especially in the identification of signatures to legal documents. When the alleged writer of the signature, the proper person to identify it, is dead, some other person familiar with his writing, *e. g.*, a bank-cashier, may be called upon to certify that the signature is in his judgment genuine.

Testimony of this kind is technically called *expert* testimony. Authority is more general in its application than expert testimony. It is not restricted to law proceedings. All men are in the habit of resorting to authority. Thus we consult a dictionary for the spelling or meaning of a word, an encyclopædia for the general facts of a man's

life, a text-book for the rules and principles of a science. Our acceptance of the authority rests on the assumption that a scholar who has made special studies in the subject is trustworthy. We ourselves have not the time for such special study ; besides, we have no reason for doubting the book.

ANALOGY.

71. Most of the reasoning in the affairs of human life is by way of Analogy. We may regard analogy as a non-scientific practical induction-deduction, or *inferring from resemblances*. A simple example is this: A. sells to B. on credit; the ground of his confidence is, perhaps, the circumstance that B. has already paid him several times for similar articles. From this he infers a permanent willingness and ability in B., *i. e.*, a general principle applicable to this particular instance. Or, if A. and B. have not had as yet any dealings, A. may know that B. belongs to a class in the community which is in the habit of paying debts, and apply this general principle.

In analogical reasoning certainty is never attainable, but only probability. This should be constantly borne in mind in following political and historical discussions, which are nearly always maintained by arguments based upon analogy.

Thus, if we analyze the arguments by which a statesman advocates a given measure, we shall usually find them to turn upon the observation that *similar* measures have been profitably adopted in a *similar* condition of affairs in the previous history of his nation, or of some other nation constituted *like* his. But similarity is not identity. Were the present condition and the previous condition identical (which they never are), the inference would be scientifically conclusive. But as the conditions are only similar, the inference is only one of probability, and this probability becomes higher the closer the similarity approximates to identity.

The value of analogy, therefore, depends upon the degree of its approximation to identity. To ensure a reasonable degree, two practical rules should be observed :

a. Discover as many points of resemblance as possible.

b. Examine closely the points of difference and show that they are accidental, *i. e.*, not essential to the present question.

These rules are easy to formulate, but they are not easy to apply. History and politics are full of examples of false analogy, due to the violation of *a* or *b* ; sometimes, of both. That is, the reasoner does not get together enough points of resemblance, or he overlooks points of serious difference. *E. g.*, it is poor reasoning to infer that, because the body suffers when the heart is enlarged, therefore a nation is enfeebled when the capital city increases rapidly in population. The resemblance between the heart and the city is too slight, too fanciful. It is also false analogy to argue that an absolute government is the best, by comparing it to the control that a father exercises over his children. The weakness lies in overlooking two points of difference: the one, that when we think of a father we really mean a good and wise father, whereas an absolute ruler may be neither good nor wise ; the second, that men are not children.

Another weak argument, but much less obvious, is this. To increase the quantity of wheat, coal, iron, etc. in a given community, is to increase the productive capacity of the community ; therefore, to double the amount of gold and silver in circulation is to increase the productive capacity. The argument overlooks at least one fundamental difference between coal and gold. Coal is of service only as it is consumed ; the more of it consumed, the greater good to the consumer and to the community. But gold is not consumed ; it merely circulates from hand to hand. Increasing the amount circulated does not increase

the production of other articles, but merely lowers the standard by which they are priced.

On the other hand, the argument advanced by Lord Chatham for removing the English troops from America, 1775, is sound :

This resistance to your arbitrary system of taxation might have been foreseen. It was obvious from the nature of things, and of mankind ; and, above all, from the Whiggish spirit flourishing in that country. The spirit which now resists your taxation is the same which formerly opposed loans, benevolences, and ship-money in England ; the same spirit which called all England "on its legs," and by the Bill of Rights vindicated the English Constitution ; the same spirit which established the great, fundamental, essential maxim of your liberties, *that no subject of England should be taxed but by his own consent.*

The points of resemblance were unmistakable : similarity of character between the Americans and the English, based upon descent ; similarity between the attempts of Charles I. and George III. to extract money by taxation without the consent of the taxed, voted by their representatives ; similarity in the form and methods of resistance in 1642 and 1775.

ARGUMENTATION IN LAW.

72. Argumentation in law-proceedings is merely a special variety of analogy. It consists in applying an old and well-established *definition* to a new case, or in applying to a new case the *principle* involved in former cases.

Definition.—See § 49. Many legal rights, obligations, and relations have been defined by the law of England and the United States, sometimes by a statute, more often by a series of decisions rendered by the courts in early times. Even where a definition is embodied in a statute, examination frequently shows that the statute has copied or imitated closely some old decision of the courts. Certain of these definitions are so precise as to admit of rigorous logical deduction. Especially is this true in the law of real property. Such terms as "estate," "heir," "heir

of the body," "fee simple," "remainder," are applied by the courts with almost mathematical precision. In criminal law also many offences have been defined most precisely by statute, such as arson, counterfeiting, burglary, and the like.

An instance of the application of an ancient definition is to be found in the well-known trial of Lord Gordon for treason, see § 70. Lord Gordon had assembled an immense multitude in St. George's Fields, London, to proceed thence to the Parliament House with a petition for the repeal of a bill in favor of the Catholics. The petition was presented to the House of Lords by Lord Gordon as member, and was rejected. The multitude thereupon became disorderly, and, being instigated by professional criminals, attacked and destroyed several Catholic chapels. Things grew rapidly worse, for several days London was in possession of the mob, until the riot was put down by soldiers called in from various military posts.

Lord Gordon was arraigned for high treason, and defended by Mr. Kenyon and Mr. Erskine. The prosecution contended that any attempt to coerce the legislature by numbers and violence was high treason. This was not disputed. Also that Lord Gordon's overt acts might fairly be *construed* as such an attempt. It was upon this second point that the case really turned. It was proved by many witnesses that Lord Gordon's acts and language had always been peaceable, that he had entreated the multitude, after presenting the petition, to disperse to their homes. Erskine, citing the definition of treason given in the statute of Edward III., as consisting either in an attempt to compass the death of the king or in levying war against him in his realm, showed that *premeditated open acts of violence, hostility, and force* were essential to the idea of levying war, as held by previous decisions. Therefore, since the accused had never advocated nor intended violence, on the contrary, had urged only peaceful measures, his acts could

not possibly be construed into treason. And so the jury decided in their verdict.

73. Case-Law.—The larger part of adjudication, especially in civil trials, consists in following the method technically known as case-law. The method is one of Analogy, § 71. *E. g.*, a dispute arises between A. and B. about the ownership of certain property. When the facts have been ascertained by Testimony (see § 70), the next step is to get together several cases, already decided, in which the state of facts is *similar*. From these cases a general principle is elicited, running through them all and determining them all. This principle is then applied to the new case in question.

The theory is simple. But to apply it one must have a mind legally trained. There is usually danger of overlooking some fact essential to the analogy. The previous cases may rest, let us say, upon five essential facts, of which only four are found in the present case. Or, contrariwise, the previous cases may rest upon only four facts, while the present case may embody a fifth fact which gives it a different character. Only a legally trained mind is able to perceive clearly what facts are essential.

Apart from facts, the untrained mind has the greatest difficulty in detecting the general legal principle underlying a number of cases which are only similar, and not identical. The superficial and minor points of difference are bewildering.

In conclusion it may be said that as Induction and Deduction in science rest upon the assumption (which is not an axiom, see § 69) that nature works with unvarying uniformity, so the administration of justice rests upon the assumption that courts shall decide uniformly. That is, a legal principle, once adopted and applied in a number of cases, shall be applied to all new cases offering a similar state of facts. The assumption is expressed in the phrase *stare decisis*, "abide by things decided."

SOME SPECIAL TERMS.

74. A few special terms used in argumentative writing call for explanation :

1. **A priori; a posteriori.**—By the former of these terms is meant reasoning from general to particular (antecedent probability), see § 67. *E. g.*, seeing the barometer fall, we infer atmospheric disturbance, and from this we conjecture a probable rain-storm. From the well-known disposition of a man we conjecture that he may have committed a certain offence. Frequently *a priori* is applied as a term of reproach to a would-be argument which assumes a general rule without attempting to verify it, and then applies it to a particular case. An example is the popular catch-word, “The State had better leave things alone,” see § 53.

A posteriori is substantially reasoning from particular to general.

2. **A fortiori** designates an argument which shows that the case in question is stronger or more probable than one already conceded to be sufficiently so. *E. g.*, “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen.” 1 *John* iv. 20.

In substance the argument is one of analogy, the application of a general principle.

3. **Dilemma.**—This consists in showing that a proposition has only two sides, each of which is untenable. *E. g.*, Burke, in attacking the (now abolished) imprisonment for debt in the discretion of the creditor, argues thus: If insolvency is not a crime, why punish it at all with imprisonment; if it is a crime, why leave the punishment to the judgment of an irresponsible citizen, the creditor? Thrown into the form of a Syllogism (§ 75, 2), the argument would be: Insolvency is either a crime or not a crime. If it is a crime, it should not be punished by the creditor. If it is not a crime, it should not be punished at all.

4. **Reductio ad absurdum.**—This consists in showing that a general principle, used for establishing a certain proposition, may be used with equal force to prove another proposition clearly absurd. *E. g.*, Sidney, in his *Defense of Poesy*, combats the argument that poetry should not be tolerated because it has sometimes been used for improper ends, by showing that other arts have been equally abused. Thus medicine, the healing art, has been employed by the poisoner. Therefore, as we do not condemn all doctors because some have been malefactors, so we need not condemn all poets because some have written immoral poems. In general, the argument from abuse is always exposed to a *reductio ad absurdum*, unless it can be shown that the abuse is inherent in and inseparable from the use.

5. **Argumentum ad hominem.**—This consists in trying to invalidate an argument by impugning the character of the person advancing it. Usually the attack takes the form of a personal retort, and is, of course, worthless; *e. g.*, when we object to a proposed reform because the person advocating it is not in our opinion a good man. Or when we reject advice because the person giving it is not free from blame. The reform may be salutary, the advice may be sound, for all that.

Not infrequently the term is loosely used to designate an appeal to the sympathy of the hearer or reader, rather than to his reason; *e. g.*, an appeal to national, local, political, or religious prejudices.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

75. Some of the difficulties encountered in studying argumentative writing may be overcome by observing a few practical hints:

1. **Terms.**—The greatest care should be taken to ascertain the exact meaning of every term essential to the argument. All writers, old as well as young, are given to using words carelessly. Therefore, since very few words in any

language are wholly free from ambiguity, there is nearly always danger of employing a given word in one sense in one place and in a different sense in another place. Although many terms cannot be defined (see § 49), it is the duty of the writer to attach, in his mind, a definite and fixed sense to each term, and it is the duty of the reader to elicit that sense. *E. g.*, if we are discussing the proposition that the annexation of Hawaii would be for the best interests of the United States (conceding the willingness of the Hawaiians to be annexed), we should determine precisely what is meant by *annexation*. Does it mean incorporation into the United States as a regular State, or does it mean acquisition of an outlying and dependent territory? Also, what are the *best interests* of the United States in such a matter?

Another proposition might be this: Theatrical entertainments are injurious to morality. What is included under *theatrical* here? Only public entertainments for money? Or private amateur theatricals, as well? Are operatic performances included? And what morality is in question? That of the spectators, of the actors, or both?

2. **Syllogism.**—Deductive reasoning is reducible to the form of a syllogism, *i. e.*, two propositions, technically called premises, and a conclusion. As soon as an argument is thrown into this shape it may be analyzed logically, and its truth or error becomes self-evident. One form of syllogism is this: All A. is B.; C. is A.; therefore C. is B.; or, all men are mortal, John is a man, therefore John is mortal. The forms of the syllogism are too numerous and complicated to be treated here. But those most in use are easily understood. For an example see § 131.

The reader should try to reduce every argument that he reads to a syllogistic form, if possible. For it is in this form that he can most readily detect any lurking error. Thus: Interference with another man's business is illegal; underselling is an interference with another man's busi-

ness ; therefore underselling is illegal. Every sound mind will perceive at a glance that here the term *interference* is used in two different senses.

Such a blunder in syllogizing is technically called a fallacy. Nearly all fallacies appear absurd when presented thus bluntly. But in actual writing they are concealed, even from the writer himself, in the mass of sentences and paragraphs. An argument from Macaulay has been cited (§ 64). Certain of his statements of fact are now rejected, notably the identification of handwriting. Disregarding this, and considering only the five other points, we may draw them up syllogistically thus: Junius must have combined [*in his own person*] all these points ; Francis did so combine them ; therefore Francis is Junius. But Macaulay overlooked and failed to prove the implication of the italicized clause, *in his own person*, although it is an essential part of his major premise. Was it necessary that the unknown writer signing himself Junius should have derived all his knowledge of facts and forms from his own experience? Modern investigators say not. The facts and forms might have been communicated to him by other men. Indeed, the present hypothesis seems to be that Junius was merely the obscure mouthpiece of other and greater men, who supplied him with the necessary data.

PART II.



EXPRESSION IN GENERAL.

76. THE individual manner in which a truly able writer expresses himself is called his "style." Thus we speak of the style of Shakespeare, of Tennyson, of Macaulay, of Carlyle. This manner is so individual, so peculiar, that it cannot be taught, nor even defined, though it may be recognized and appreciated. Being the outcome of a mature mind, it presupposes definite principles and aims in life, a diligent study of men and things and books, and a no less diligent practice of the art of writing.

If, by eliminating the individual element, we try to learn the principles and rules which have been followed by good writers in general, we deal no longer with Style proper, but with Style in a lower sense; to use a safe term, we deal with Expression. The principles and rules of Expression, taken in their totality, are numerous, complicated, and do not admit of rigorous classification. In fact, the study of expression is endless, as will be evident to every one who glances at the treatises upon rhetoric which have been written since the days of Aristotle. Nevertheless, from the tangle of so-called systems we may disengage two general truths. The one is, that poetry has its own modes of expression, differing perceptibly from those of prose. To quote Coleridge's aphorism, poetry has a different logic from prose. Therefore it is scarcely feasible, certainly inadvisable, to discuss the modes of poetry in a book designed for young writers of prose. The other truth

is this: Although many qualities may be desirable in prose—*e. g.*, such qualities as wit, humor, pathos, etc.—there are only three general qualities indispensable in all prose. These are Clearness, Force, Propriety. That is to say, we have a right to demand of every writer that he shall express himself clearly, forcibly, and in good taste. More than this we may not demand, except of those who aspire to be authors by eminence. The present work, accordingly, treats only of these three qualities.

CHAPTER IX.

CLEARNESS.

77. CLEARNESS as a feature of the general structure of a composition has been already touched upon in the chapters upon Paragraphing. Thus clearness will result from the careful observance of the rules of Unity and Sequence. See §§ 3, 5, and extracts there quoted. See also §§ 8–13 on the Echo, Connectives, Topic-Sentence, etc. as devices for securing clearness, and §§ 17, 18 on Paragraph-Echo and Link-Paragraph.

In the present chapter attention is called to clearness as resulting from the right choice of words and from the right framing of simple sentences.

1. SINGLE WORDS.

78. In a language so composite as English the difficulty of choosing our words rightly is very great—perhaps greater than in any other language. We have in the last four or five centuries changed our pronunciation thoroughly; we have changed our spelling almost as much. We have confounded in sound and in form words differing widely in origin and in meaning. We have lost many native words that would have been intelligible from their mere form, and have replaced them with foreign words which, to the uneducated, are almost, if not quite, unintelligible.

E. g., we pronounce *aisle*, *isle*, *island*, with the same long *i*-vowel. The first comes from the French *aile*, “wing,” a word without *s*; the second, from the French *île* (earlier *isle*), in which the *s* has long been silent; the third is an

old English word without *s*, originally *ī-land* (*īg-land*), "water-land." Similarly, *boil*, "ulcer," is of English origin; *boil*, "to heat," is French. Compare also *curry*, the East Indian name of a sauce, with the verb to *curry* a horse. Sometimes the same word is used in opposite senses; *e. g.*, *mortal*, as in "mortal man," certain to die, and "mortal wound," certain to kill; or "capital punishment" and "a capital speech." *Nervous* sometimes means "strong," sometimes "weak." The naturalist hesitates to speak of "big-brained" and "little-brained" animals, and prefers the terms *macrencephalous* and *micrencephalous*.

To account for the oddities of our English vocabulary is the task of the philologist. The ordinary writer and reader can only accept the facts and make the best of them. To achieve even moderate success in the ready and correct use of English words, one must be painstaking and persevering. A few practical suggestions will be of help.

79. Use of Dictionaries.—See Definition, § 49. At the present day some good dictionary should be always accessible to every scholar, and the constant use of one should be required of every scholar. The teacher who suffers his class to use words in ignorance of their meaning, or to pass them over unheeded in reading, neglects the plainest duty of the profession. In a general way it may even be asserted that the chief aim of education is to teach the correct use of words. For it is through words that the greater part of our knowledge is given and received.

The study of one word at a time is necessarily slow. The acquisition of a vocabulary may be hastened by studying words in groups and noting the effect of different prefixes and suffixes. *E. g.*, there are such groups as *envi-ous*, *envi-able*; *contemptu-ous*, *contempt-ible*; *master-ful*, *master-ly*; *un-interested*, *dis-interested*; *ac-cident*, *in-cident*; *luxuri-ous*, *luxuri-ant*. Every teacher should find it both easy and profitable to arouse the scholar's attention to

these and similar groups. There are also special books for the study of prefixes and suffixes and groups of words from a common stem.

80. Good Reading.—The surest way to learn the correct use of words lies in the conscientious reading of good literature. At one time, indeed, this was the only way. Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, had no dictionaries like ours. They acquired their vocabulary chiefly through reading and conversation. In their day, it is true, the language had not yet been swelled with its present mass of scientific terms; it was more restricted, more within the grasp of a person of average education. We who have larger needs cannot dispense with dictionaries. But we still can do, in a measure at least, as the earlier writers did: we can learn our literary words and phrases from our predecessors as they learned their words from their predecessors.

Words which we acquire directly from a good writer make a definite impression and are retained in the memory. They have a vitality which is lost in the columns of a dictionary. When we repeat them in our writing we feel that we are safe, because we are acting under the best guidance. The student should note the significance of Macaulay's words, *e. g.*, in § 3, "*domineering* passion;" "*boldly* and *fairly* investigating;" "*inclined* to scepticism and *fond* of paradox" (an exact description of one side of Johnson's character). Attention has already been called to De Quincey's choice of words, § 6. In Hawthorne, § 8, note the "*tramp* of his *ponderous* boots;" "response;" "*choleric* in temperament." In Coleridge, § 9, note "pertinent" (also used by him, § 3); "*linked* strain;" "adhering." In Burke, § 9, note "conservation and correction;" "dissolve the fabric" (an echo of Prospero's speech, *Tempest*, iv. 1). In the first passage from Irving, § 12, note "redoubtable;" "rat of a pony;" "*rusty* tail;" "*bustling* times."

Through attentive reading we learn to master not only single words, but also peculiar phrases. An instance is the expression *to curry favor*. Here no other noun can be substituted for *favor*. To write, "Johnson went to London to curry *friends* there," is to make one's self ridiculous. The phrase means simply to gain the favor of a person by flattery. Its history is very curious.

To read thoroughly a few books by good authors is better than to read a large amount carelessly and without discrimination. Irving's *Rip Van Winkle*, *Sleepy Hollow*, and the Christmas papers, one of Scott's romances, one of Hawthorne's, one by Dickens, an essay or two by Macaulay, will, if thoroughly studied, supply a vocabulary ample enough for the needs of the ordinary prose-writer. Irving and Hawthorne, being Americans and writing usually upon American subjects, are peculiarly suited to American pupils. Their words and phrases are clear and simple and chosen with scrupulous care.

81. Blunders in the Use of Words.—To mention and correct all the blunders possible in the use of English words would be an endless task. But attention should be called to certain classes of blunders.

(1) Using a word which does not properly bear the meaning which the writer wishes to convey. *E. g.*, *transpire*, in the sense of "happen." The verb *transpire* rightfully means "to become known." *Aggravate*, which means "to make worse"—as when we say that a person aggravates an offence by making a lame excuse for it—is misused in the sense of "provoke, irritate," as in the phrase, "his manner was *aggravating*." *Liable*, which means exposed to a certain unpleasant contingency, is misused in the sense of "likely," as in the phrase, "Shall I be *liable* to find him at home?" *Demean* is misused in the sense of "degrade, debase," by confusion with the English adjective "mean;" in reality it comes from the French *de-*

mener, and properly means "to conduct one's self," either badly or well according to the accompanying adverb.

To stop, in the sense of *to stay*, is a common blunder. Properly used, *to stop* means *to arrest* a certain movement; *e. g.*, "Stop talking!" "I stopped at your office on my way up town." *To stay* means *to remain* in one place or condition for a considerable time; *e. g.*, "I stayed a month in London," but "I stopped over night in Albany on my way to Chicago." The following expressions are not correct: "He is *stopping* away from home." "Where are you *stopping*?" (*i. e.*, where are you rooming, in which hotel are you? The older form was: Where are you lodged? But this sounds archaic. Where are you *staying*? is better than Where are you *stopping*?)

(2) Confounding words which have some resemblance and come from the same stem, but differ in meaning. *E. g.*, *reverend*, meaning entitled to veneration, and *reverent*, paying veneration to; *relic*, a remnant, a memorial, and *relict*, a woman whose husband is dead, a widow. The confusion of *expect* and *suspect* is almost chronic in America; one hears it from the lips of persons otherwise well educated. Yet the difference is marked. *Expect* means to look forward to something as likely to happen in the future; *suspect*, to conjecture the existence of something in the present or the past. Thus, "I expect him to arrive at three o'clock;" but, "He is, I suspect, not diligent." *Observation* is sometimes confounded with *observance*; *acceptation* with *acceptance*.

(3) *Ambiguous Words*.—A truly ambiguous word is one which has two distinct meanings, coming from different sources and coinciding in form. There are not many such words in the language. One is *curry*, mentioned in §§ 78, 80. Another is *defer*, meaning "to submit to," from the Latin *de-ferre*, and *defer* "to put off," from *dis-ferre*. Thus we say, "I defer to your judgment in this matter," and "I will, at your request, defer making the attempt for the

present." A third is *let*. The Anglo-Saxon *lætan*, "to permit" (compare modern German *lassen*), and the Anglo-Saxon *lettan*, "to hinder" (compare modern German *verletzen*), have coalesced in our modern English. But the "hinder" verb is now almost obsolete; it survives in the law phrase "without *let* or hindrance," in Hamlet's speech (i. sc. 5), "Unhand me, gentlemen; By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that *lets* me," and in the lawn-tennis term *let*, applied to a served ball that strikes the top of the net in passing into the receiving court.

Usually a so-called ambiguous word is one which started with only one primary meaning, but has developed in the course of time many secondary meanings, some of which are liable to confusion. An example is *overlook*. We *overlook* a person in the sense of watching him closely; we also *overlook* a person in the sense of failing to see him at all. Another is *money*, used sometimes in the sense of coin or its paper equivalent, sometimes in the sense of credit, loans, etc. When the stock-market reports *money* as scarce, the meaning is that borrowers have difficulty in finding lenders; the amount of actual money—i. e., coin, or bank-notes—in the country may not have diminished at all. *Theory*, which properly means the formal summing of all that we actually know upon a subject (see Coleridge, § 3), has acquired "the vulgar sense of a mere fiction of the imagination," a visionary scheme or untried project.

Many indefinable terms (see §§ 49, 50) are used so incessantly and so carelessly that the reader is often puzzled to catch the writer's sense. Among such terms are *nature*, *liberty*, *democratic*, *republican*, *radical*, *conservative*, etc. In writing, one should attach a definite meaning to every indefinable term, and adhere to that meaning throughout the composition.

82. Precision.—This is clearness intensified to the utmost. We are precise when, instead of using a word

which might convey our meaning fairly well, we use a word which conveys it absolutely, so that nothing can be added or subtracted. Precision is all-important in scientific and technical writing. Each branch of science has its own set of terms, which are used as rigorously as the mathematician uses his algebraic signs. *E. g.*, an ordinary writer may use the word *heart-beats*, but the physiologist uses *systole* and *diastole* (see Foster, § 55). In ordinary writing *hole* or *opening* would be good enough, but the anatomist uses the terms *perforation* and *foramen*. Note also *mammæ*, *placental embryo*, *callosities*, in Huxley, § 49.

Even in writing which is for the general rather than for the professional reader precision is a desirable quality. Yet writers of high rank differ not a little in this respect. Among the poets Byron and Scott are less precise than Wordsworth and Shelley, Longfellow and Whittier less precise than Lowell and Bryant. Among prose-writers Macaulay is less precise than Carlyle and De Quincey, Irving and Addison than Hawthorne and George Eliot.

Precision is sometimes necessary, and is always desirable, provided it be not misapplied or carried to excess. It is necessary in writing professionally upon a professional subject. *E. g.*, *throwing* is generally enough, but in describing a ball-game we must distinguish throwing from *pitching*. Usually *sword* is sufficient, but in certain situations we should have to specify *broadsword*, or *sabre*, or *cutlass*, etc. Usually it is enough to call the earth *round*; to call it *spherical* is to approach precision; but to be truly precise, we should describe it as a *sphere flattened at the poles*.

One general caution may be given. Do not be precise out of place; *i. e.*, when writing upon a non-technical subject do not use technical terms which you cannot assume to be readily intelligible to the ordinary reader. For if the reader is forced to puzzle out the meaning, he will probably look upon the writer as obscure. *E. g.*, De Quin-

cey writes: "In the twinkling of an eye I came to an *adamantine* resolution." The adjective has here a very precise shade of meaning, but this nicety is lost upon nearly every one of De Quincey's readers. *Unalterable* or *not to be shaken* would have been more practical.

Occasionally the most precise language is justifiable for an ordinary event. Thus the crowd gathered around a dog-fight is described as:

A crowd *annular, compact, and mobile, a crowd centripetal*, having its eyes and its heads all bent downwards and inwards to one common *focus*.

Here the use of such exact terms produces an intentionally ludicrous effect.

2. THE SENTENCE.

83. A sentence is clear when the order of words and phrases is such that the reader has no difficulty in following the movement of the writer's thought. Nearly two thousand years ago, Quintilian uttered the dictum: "It is not enough to be understood; make sure that you cannot possibly be misunderstood."* Unfortunately, the dictum is only an exhortation. It is not a working rule: it fails to teach us how to make ourselves clear. The quality of clearness, so desirable and so valuable, is to be obtained only at the price of close thinking and incessant self-correction. In order to make self-correction most effective, the writer must acquire the habit of criticizing his own writing as if it were the work of another person—something in which he is to find an error at every turn. Pope's adage, reversed, would be a safe motto:

Whatever is, is *wrong*.

Self-correction is literally justice without mercy.

Usually there is no serious difficulty in arranging the

* A free rendering of the Latin: *Non ut intellegere possit, sed ne omnino possit non intellegere, curandum.*—viii. ch. ii.

cardinal words of the sentence—*i. e.*, the noun-subject, the verb, and the noun-object. The difficulty occurs in placing those words and phrases which modify or qualify the main assertion, and in the use of pronouns.

84. Pronouns.—Since a true pronoun is a substitute for a noun, the logic of grammar demands that the noun for which the pronoun is substituted, the antecedent, should be the noun immediately preceding the pronoun. Any other reference is faulty. *E. g.:*

Thus I have given you my opinion, as well as that of a great majority of both houses here, relating to this weighty affair; upon *which* I am confident you may securely reckon.

The *which* refers grammatically to *affair*, but the writer (Swift) intended it to refer to *opinion*. He would have escaped the blunder by using the phrase *upon which opinion*.

Two other words occur to me which are very commonly mangled by our clergy. One of *these* is covetous and its substantive covetousness.

These refers grammatically to *clergy*; in sense, to *words*. The change to *one of these words* would have made everything clear.

The farmer went to his neighbor and told *him* that *his* cattle were in *his* field.

What are the antecedents of the italicized words? Presumably the cattle are the neighbor's and the field is the farmer's. But grammatically the field also is the neighbor's.

John found the key, locked the door, and went away, putting *it* in his pocket.

Put the *door* in his pocket?

The pronoun *it* is often used without sufficient regard to its different functions. These are three:*

* We may even add a fourth, the impersonal object *it*; *e. g.*.

Come, and trip *it* as you go

On the light fantastic toe.—MILTON: *L'Allegro*.

1. The impersonal subject; *e. g.*, *It rains.*

2. *It* used pleonastically at the beginning of the sentence; *e. g.*, *It is a true saying, that, etc.*, which is the same as, *The saying is true, that, etc.*

3. *It* referring to a definite antecedent; *e. g.*, *I have read the book and like it.*

We should be on our guard against using *it* in more than one of these functions in the same sentence; *e. g.* :

Quinine is a powerful tonic; *it* (2) is best not to use *it* (3) too freely.

The sentence may be amended in various ways; *e. g.*, *Quinine is a powerful tonic, and should not be used too freely. Or, Quinine, etc.; it should not be used too freely. Or, We should not use it, etc.*

Frequently *it* is used as if there were an antecedent, when in reality there is none expressed. *E. g.* :

Whenever the queen travels, *it* is duly announced in the newspapers.

Here we should say, the *event*, or the *fact*, is announced.

85. Who, which; that.—Of late years, American textbooks of grammar and rhetoric have advanced the doctrine that *who* and *which* are to be used only when the sense is co-ordinative; when the sense is restrictive, *that* is to be preferred. The relative pronoun is co-ordinative when it is equivalent to a conjunction plus a demonstrative pronoun.* *E. g.* :

But flesh with the life thereof, *which* is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

Here *which* is co-ordinative, equivalent to *and this (life)*.

The peace *that* was now made, *which* is known as the peace of Westphalia, made some important changes in Europe.

Here *that* is restrictive, defining the particular peace; *which* is co-ordinative. Further examples are :

The train *that* has just passed is the limited. (Restrictive.)

Your train, *which* is the limited, is one hour late. (Co-ordinative.)

* See Genung, *Practical Elements of Rhetoric*, p. 127.

He gave a reward to the man *that* brought the news. (Restrictive.)

The man, *who* had been standing all this while, fell to the ground.
(Co-ordinative.)

The advocates of the above doctrine admit several exceptions. Thus, if the demonstrative *that* is used in the antecedent clause, it should not be used in the relative clause; *e. g.*, That book *which* I lent you. Nor should *that* be used after a preposition in the relative clause; *e. g.*, The book of *which* I have been speaking.

This distinction between *who* or *which* and *that*, although it is insisted upon by teachers of high authority, is not sustained by the practice of the best prose-writers of this century in England. *E. g.* :

Some domineering passion *which* prevented him from boldly and fairly investigating.—MACAULAY, § 3.

The storm *which* I had outlived, . . . the premature sufferings *which* I had paid down.—DE QUINCEY, § 6.

Persons *who* owed as little as himself to education.—MACAULAY, § 8.

On grounds *which*, in sincerity, you believe to be true.—DE QUINCEY, § 10.

Land was the only species of property *which*, in the old time, carried any respectability with it.—COLERIDGE, § 15.

The only guest *who* is certain . . . to find his way.—HAWTHORNE, § 18.

Chatham sleeps . . . in a spot *which* has ever since been appropriated to statesmen.—MACAULAY, § 21.

But there is another memorial of Edgar Tryon, *which* bears a fuller record, etc.

The man *who* has left such a memorial, etc.—GEORGE ELIOT, § 21.

The most exalted object *which* we are capable of conceiving.—DARWIN, § 21.

The prevalence of cries and catchwords *which* are very apt to receive an application, or to be used with an absoluteness, *which* do not belong to them.

It merely conveys a notion *which* certain people have generalized from certain facts.—MATTHEW ARNOLD, § 53.

The above examples indicate a marked, and perhaps a growing, tendency to favor *who* and *which*, and to restrict *that* to the office of a demonstrative pronoun. As for the assumed need of clearness in discriminating between *who* or *which* and *that*, it does not appear to have occurred to Macaulay, De Quincey, Coleridge, George Eliot, Matthew Arnold. The only prominent writer who seems to favor *that* is Carlyle; perhaps his use of it is a Scotticism.

The general device for designating a co-ordinative relative clause is to enclose it in commas (see § 131). *E. g.*:

My father, who was a young man at the time and knew some of the persons involved, has often told me this story.

A restrictive relative clause need not be thus punctuated, and is not, according to the practice of the best proof-readers. *E. g.*:

Poems are separated one from another which possess a kinship of subject or of treatment far more vital and deep than the supposed unity of mental origin which was Wordsworth's reason for joining them with others.—MATTHEW ARNOLD: *Poems of Wordsworth*, Preface, p. xii.

86. Modifiers.—Under this head are here included not only adverbs proper but phrases expressive of time, place, manner, and the like. The following are constant sources of confusion: *Only* (*not only—but also*); *at least*; *at all events*; *either—or*; *than* (not adverbial expressions, but treated here for convenience).

Only is properly placed immediately before the word or clause which it qualifies; *e. g.*:

He is only eighteen.

He arrived only yesterday.

Only he knows of this.

This position is the proper one for *not only—but also*:

The lightning struck not only the tree but also the barn.

But in a very simple sentence *only*—modifying the subject

or the object—may follow it without causing confusion ;
e. g. :

He only is left.

I saw him only.

In the following much-discussed passage from Addison :

By greatness I do not only mean the bulk of a single object, but the largeness of a whole view,

the whole structure is faulty, and cannot be remedied by merely transposing *only*. Addison really meant to say :

By greatness I mean, not so much the bulk of any single object, as the largeness of a whole view.

It is also to be kept in mind that *only* is now frequently used in the sense of *but*, *however*, and in this sense always stands at the beginning ; *e. g. :*

You may tell this if you wish ; only do not mention my name.

Than. In such phrases as :

I like peaches better than apples.

Henry is older than William,

there is no ambiguity. But :

William likes Henry better than James

is ambiguous. It may mean either that W. likes H. better than he likes J., or that W. likes H. better than J. likes H. To avoid ambiguity such forms of comparison must be written out in full, as :

William likes Henry better than *he* likes James ; or,

William likes Henry better than James *likes him*.

Even this emendation might not pass with the hypercritical, who would declare *he*, *him*, to be ambiguous. But the ordinary reader would be satisfied. For the writer who really meant to say that

William likes Henry better than *Henry* likes James ; or,

William likes Henry better than James likes *William*,

would be careful to say so.

At least; at all events. These are placed just after the words which they modify. Thus:

He at least is ready,

means that he is ready, though the others may not be; but

He knows how to read at least,

means that he can read, but perhaps cannot sing.

Either—or should immediately precede that which they modify. Thus:

You can either go or stay at home,

is correct. But it is faulty to write:

You can either go to New York or to Boston.

It is better to write:

You can go either to New York or to Boston.

Misrelated Participle.—This is a participle which fails to indicate the noun (or pronoun) with which it is really connected. *E. g.:*

Mentioning this fact to my friend, he replied, etc.

Here the only noun (pronoun) with which *mentioning* can be grammatically connected is *friend (he)*. To make both sense and grammar, the wording should be:

When *I* mentioned this fact to my friend, he replied, etc.; or,

On my mentioning this fact, etc.

Such faulty constructions are common in rapid writing. They are due to careless mechanical imitation of legitimate constructions, like:

Mentioning this fact to my friend, *I* was surprised to hear him reply.

where *mentioning* and *I* are correctly related; or,

My friend mentioning this fact to me, I replied, etc.,

where the first clause is a correct absolute construction.

§7. Dislocation of Clauses.—Frequently a clause cor-

rect in itself is put in the wrong place, thereby producing confusion and sometimes absurdity. *E. g. :*

At her mother's death Harriet was left wholly dependent upon her elder sister, who five years before had married George, *for counsel and support.*

At first sight this reads as if we were called upon to commiserate the elder sister for having married a husband for the sake of counsel and support. But the writer really meant to say :

At her mother's death Harriet was left—for counsel and support—wholly dependent upon her elder sister, who, etc.

Clauses introduced by *if, unless, though (although)*, are frequently ambiguous. The ambiguity may be avoided, if the writer will bear in mind that the condition expressed in such words *remains in force as long as the construction is unchanged.* Therefore do not introduce *if, unless*, etc. in a continuous construction unless you wish to let the condition remain in force. *E. g. :*

The fire will spread, if the engines do not come soon, and much property will be destroyed.

Here *and* continues grammatically the condition ; *if* the engines do not come, *if* much property will be destroyed. The awkwardness is easily cured :

If the engines do not come soon, the fire will spread and much property will be destroyed.

It would be impossible to classify all the blunders due to misplacing clauses. They are of every conceivable variety. *E. g. :*

Passengers are requested to purchase tickets before entering the cars, *at the company's office.*

He was asked to play a solo on the violin, *of his own composing.*

No rules can be devised against blunders like these. Only one general caution may be of help—namely, to treat every modifying clause upon the *a priori* assumption, § 74, that it is *out* of place until it is clearly shown to be in

place. The root of the evil lies in the natural disposition to write as we speak. But this disposition is dangerous unless controlled. In conversation we rely upon gestures, and especially upon the intonations of the voice, to make our meaning clear. These aids disappear, of course, in writing. Here we must rely solely upon the written or printed sign. Common sense, therefore, should teach us to put the signs close together only when the thoughts expressed by them are closely connected.

CHAPTER X.

FORCE.

FORCE as a quality of paragraph-structure has been treated by implication in Chapters II.-IV. A due observance of the principles of Unity and Sequence, a careful use of the Subject-Sentence, and a proper adjustment of each paragraph to its predecessors and successors, will impart force to the composition as a whole.

In the present chapter Force is treated with regard to the single sentence. And, as in the chapter upon Clearness, attention is directed, first, to the choice of words, next, to the sentence-structure.

1. SINGLE WORDS.

88. No rule can be given for choosing words with a view to force. A philologist might even be disposed to deny that any single word is in itself strong or weak, and to assert that its strength or weakness is the result of its fitness or unfitness in the particular sentence. *E. g.*, when we characterize Webster's Dartmouth College speech as "a *powerful* argument," we are certainly forcible. But to speak of some one as "*powerful* weak," or "*powerful* mean," is anything but forcible.* When Pope writes:

Our author, happy in a judge so *nice*,

he uses the strongest adjective available in the circumstances. But when the ordinary speaker says, "We had a *nice* time," he is decidedly weak. The following also is weak:

* This use of *powerful* as an adverb, equivalent to *very*, is not uncommon in certain districts of the United States.

A very *nice* way to preserve the relation between paragraphs is to make one paragraph echo the preceding.

Here *nice* is tame. "An *efficient* way" would have been far more expressive. If we say that the rush of water at Niagara is *tremendous*, we are forcible; but if we say that a certain player in a foot-ball game had a *tremendous fall*, we exaggerate and are consequently weak.

But, as a practical matter, apart from philological theory, there are certain words which the usage of the best English writers has reserved for uncommon situations. Such words, therefore, we may classify for practical purposes as forcible. They are words descriptive of the truly great achievements of the human mind, expressive of the strongest emotions, applicable to the worst faults and noblest virtues; such words as *superb*, *magnificent*, *awful*, *terrible*, *heroic*, *tragic*, etc. To use one of these words in a commonplace situation is to weaken the impression by wasting our resources. We are like a man who uses a sledge-hammer for driving in tacks. Courage may be courage without being *sublime*; a railroad bridge may be skilfully built without being *stupendous*; a violent and painful death may be sad without being *tragic*; dishonesty may have serious consequences without being a *gigantic fraud*; a man may live in a handsome house and yet not *occupy a palatial mansion*.

We should never forget that force is not absolute, but only relative. If to express a grand thing grandly is good writing, it is no less good writing to express a simple thing simply. This ability to express the simple things simply is characteristic of the best writers in every language, and is to be learned from them. Force, even more than clearness, is a matter of sound literary tradition. We may perhaps catch the general meaning of a word from its dictionary definition, but we cannot learn to estimate its force by this means.

We are to bear in mind also that of all the parts of speech the one most liable to abuse is the adjective. For

the adjective expresses quality, and quality usually admits of numerous shades or gradations. *E. g.*, shall we describe a woman as *pretty*, or as *beautiful*? As *charming*, or as *fascinating*, or as *bewitching*? Shall we describe a mountain range as *tall*, or as *lofty*, or as *towering*? Is physical pain *severe*, or is it *excruciating*?

Carlyle, when not vituperating, is singularly forcible in his choice of adjectives. Thus note § 44, first extract, *noble, umbrageous, serene, stately, massive, wavy, guardian, embossed*; second extract, *ruddy-tinged, slow-heaving, tremulous*. In Stanley, § 37, note *multitudinous* irregularities. Perhaps the word is an echo of Lady Macbeth's "multitudinous seas;" Stanley is said to have taken a copy of Shakespeare with him on his march. In Green, § 38, note *dauntless* courage, *amazing* self-confidence, *impetuous* will. In Hawthorne, § 38, *unmalleable* cast; in § 41, *ominous* shadow, *league-long* strides, *majestic* landscape; in § 42, *aristocratic* flowers, *plebeian* vegetables. In De Quincey, § 43, *unpretending* cottage, *eternal* tea-pot, *tenure so perishable*. In George Eliot, § 43, *pale meteor, gleaming* eyes, *bloodless* lips, *mimic* suns, *bossed* sword-hilts.

Additional examples can be gathered from the other extracts.

89. Abused Words and Expressions.—Certain words and expressions, good in themselves, are worn threadbare with excessive use and abuse. Thus women are given to describing things agreeable or disagreeable as *lovely* or *horrid*; the nearest masculine equivalents are *fine*, or *awful*, and *swell*. In England a thing is done in good or bad *form*; in America, in good or bad *style*. Certain professions and classes favor certain terms to excess; *e. g.*, a judge or a lawyer is always *learned*; in surgery a bold and successful operation is *brilliant*. The average congressman *champions* or else *antagonizes* a measure.

Every person is apt to fall into the excessive use of certain words, either through carelessness or through unfa-

miliarity with the resources of the language. No rule, of course, can be given for correcting such individual faults. But the following suggestion may be helpful. Read your composition carefully and repeatedly, noting the number of repetitions. If they seem too numerous, ask yourself whether it is not possible to remedy the fault, either by employing synonyms or by changing the structure of the sentences. The latter expedient is especially to be recommended. It breaks up monotony, and monotony is a standing hindrance to force.

Apart from special and individual abuses, there are certain general ones.

Very; so; such a. How much *very* is abused may be learned by comparing a few pages of ordinary composition with the numerous extracts quoted in §§ 2-75. In these extracts *very* occurs only 30 times in all, thus, 3 in Hawthorne, § 36 (the passage is light conversation and suited to persons like Hepzibah and Clifford); 1 in Hawthorne, § 44 (also in a light vein); 1 in Hawthorne, § 48; 2 in Huxley, § 51; 1 in Tait, § 51; 1 in Macaulay, § 64; 1 in Addison, § 4; 1 in Addison, § 28; 1 in Goldsmith, § 15; 1 in De Quincey, § 18; 1 in De Foe, § 43. In Irving, § 12, "the *very* witching time," and in Green, § 38, "the *very* air," the word retains its original sense of *real, really*, and is not a mere intensive adverb. Certainly the example set by good writers should teach moderation.

Such. Properly used, *such* is not an intensive, but a correlative. It is properly used by Dickens, § 41, "*such* a strange scene . . . that I could," etc., and by George Eliot, § 21, where we are to supply the ellipsis, "*such* a monument," viz. as that of Edgar Tryon. A similar ellipsis is to be supplied in Lowell, § 11, "*such* admirable dinners," viz. as the Devil's.

To employ *such* as a mere intensive, in the sense of *very, highly*, etc., e. g., "This is *such* an interesting book," is to misuse language and speak tamely rather than forcibly.

So. This is either a demonstrative, equivalent to *thus*, or a correlative. Note the correct use by Landor, § 15, and De Quincey, § 6, "*so then*."

The sentence, "This book is *so* interesting," is as bad as the other sentence, "This is *such* an interesting book," and for the same reason.

90. *And.* This word is misused and abused without the slightest regard to its true office. Especially is it used out of place at the beginning of sentences and paragraphs.

Good writers seldom begin a sentence, and scarcely ever begin a paragraph, with *and*. In the extracts, §§ 2-75, there is not one paragraph beginning thus, and there are only 8 sentences, *e. g.*, 3 in De Quincey, § 36 (beginning of the third section of the quotation), § 43 (the whole passage is in a jocular vein), § 31 (an instance of repeated structure); 1 in George Eliot, § 43; 1 in Hawthorne, § 11; 1 in Macaulay, § 21.

In the following passages *and* is superfluous within the sentence :

"*and* when you shut one off," Tait, § 64.

"*and*, finally, the relations," Huxley, § 51.

In Stanley, § 37, *and* is used too frequently. On the other hand, in Carlyle, § 44, observe the boldness due to the omission of the copula; *and* occurs only once, and there it is indispensable.

For correct and forcible use of *and* see Shelley, § 40, and Dickens, § 41.

Faulty use of *and* results from a wrong conception of the word. Let us first consider what the word is *not*.

a. *And* is not the universal copula, but only one out of many.

b. It is not properly used to mark any and every stage in the writer's thinking, or to mark any and every change in structure.

c. It is not the proper copula for expressing subordina-

tion, or the relation of cause and effect, time and place, or the sequence in which one action grows out of another.

On the contrary, the sole legitimate use of *and* is to mark *addition* or *co-ordination*.

Observe, in Hawthorne, § 38, "They now went down stairs, *where* Phœbe . . . took the most active part," etc., how aptly the relation of place (and time) is indicated by *where*. An ordinary slip-shod writer, using *and* instead of *where*, would have missed the point.

The following is a specimen of newspaper tameness:

In other years Senator Anthony's crisp and pungent paragraphs in the journal were very notable and influential, *and* his paper was one of the half-dozen leading journals in New England.*

Why could not the writer have expressed cause and effect? Thus:

In other years Senator Anthony, *by* his crisp and pungent paragraphs, made the journal one of the, etc.

School and college writing overflows with *and*. Often the word is useless, or worse than useless. Failing to state what the writer really has in mind, it makes the whole expression limp. The best working rule for both scholar and teacher would be to reject every *and* that fails to demonstrate its right of being. The scholar should be asked if he is trying to express some relation of cause, time, place, or the like. If he is, he should be required to rewrite the sentence. (See § 93.)

91. But. Since this word expresses some opposition or contrast, it is not properly used to express a mere change in the direction of thought. Yet even good writers thus misuse it.

The following is correct and normal:

Practice and training may bring me more into rule; *but* at present I am as useless for regular service as . . . a Don Cossack.

* Quoted in Genung's *Practical Rhetoric*, p. 184.

Here *but* contrasts *at present* with *in future* (implied although not expressed in the first sentence).

The following is improper:

But above all let us not be influenced by any angry feelings, etc.

Here *but* expresses no contrast whatever; it merely introduces the last in a series of thoughts or considerations, all of the same kind. *And* would be correcter. The most forcible expression, however, would be the simple, un-introduced, *Above all*.

It must be admitted that writers of high rank begin sentences, and occasionally paragraphs, with *but*; e. g., Irving, § 13 (third extract). The practice is not to be commended to the young, who will do better to acquire the habit of keeping the word out of so prominent a place.

Macaulay is a dangerous example in this respect. His use of *but*, although it can scarcely be called incorrect, is certainly excessive. *E. g.*:

The immoral English writers of the seventeenth century are indeed less excusable than those of Greece and Rome. *But* the worst English writings of the seventeenth century are decent, compared with much that has been bequeathed to us by Greece and Rome. Plato, we have little doubt, was a much better man than Sir George Etherege. *But* Plato has written things at which Sir George Etherege would have shuddered.

Here the reader is jerked backward and forward from contrast to contrast. The impression made upon him is that of fitfulness, rather than of sustained power. Macaulay would have stated his views more clearly, and at the same time more convincingly, had he written after this fashion:

The immoral English writers of the seventeenth century, *though* less excusable indeed than those of Greece and Rome, are *nevertheless* more decent. *Thus* Plato, who was, we have little doubt, a much better man than Sir George Etherege, has written things at which Sir George would have shuddered.

2. THE SENTENCE.

92. Position; Balance.—The significant places in a sentence are the beginning and the end, especially the end. If the writer puts his leading thought in one or the other of these places, he will make his sentence forcible. An example much quoted in illustration of this is the following:

On whatever side we contemplate Homer, what principally strikes us is his wonderful invention.

Observe also De Quincey, § 17:

In glided . . . not my fair sister, but my bronzed Bengal uncle.

The concluding sentence in Macaulay, § 21, is forcible; also the conclusion in Gibbon, § 25. Most remarkable of all is the conclusion of the long sentence in De Quincey, § 31:

From the silence . . . roar of his voice.

On the other hand, in the first part of the same extract from De Quincey, note the emphasis due to position at the beginning of a sentence: "*Here* was the map," "*The horse*," "*He*, of all the party," "*The little carriage*," "*The young man*," "*But his* was the steadiness." In the extract from the *Outlook*, § 3, note the emphasis of the clauses, "*By the power*," "*He it is*." In Irving, § 9, "*Even the critics*." In Green, § 38, "*Of womanly reserve*." In Carlyle, § 44, "*Beautiful*," "*of the greenest*."

Balance. This consists in making the clauses equal, or nearly equal, in length and weight, and in making the parts of speech in one clause correspond to the same parts in another clause; *e. g.*, Johnson's reply to Lord Chesterfield:

The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labors, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary and cannot impart it; till I am known and do not want it.

Note how the several clauses balance each other. Also the correspondence of *early* and *kind* ; of *indifferent*, *solitary*, and *known* ; of *enjoy*, *impart*, and *want*.

In Macaulay, § 3, note the correspondence of *great powers* and *low prejudices* ; of *best parts* and *worst parts* ; of *gigantic elevation* and *dwarfish littleness*.

A sentence in which the emphatic word or phrase comes at the beginning is frequently an inverted sentence ; *e. g.*, "By the power," *Outlook*, § 3 ; "Of womanly reserve," Green, § 38.

One in which the emphatic word or phrase comes at the end is called a *periodic*, or *suspended*, sentence. *E. g.* :

On whatever side we contemplate Homer, what principally strikes us is his wonderful invention.

Whether this be owing to an obstinate perseverance in error, or to a religious adherence to what appears to me truth and reason, it is in your equity to judge.—BURKE: *Conciliation*, p. 163.

Religion, always a principle of energy, in this new people is in no way worn out or impaired.—BURKE: *Conciliation*, p. 180.

Other hope, in studying such books, we have none.—CARLYLE: *Biography*.

A writer who uses periodic sentences habitually or frequently is said to have a periodic style.

It is not advisable to use inverted, balanced, or periodic sentences too frequently. They become mannerisms and weary the reader. Hence Johnson's style is commonly regarded as wearisome. Even Macaulay's, by reason of its excessive use of antithetic balance, is losing somewhat of its hold upon the reading public. Too many sentences like this :

The Puritans hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectator.

make one also suspect that the words may have been chosen, not because they convey the truth exactly, but because they strike the ear. (See § 116.)

Loose Sentences. If it is undesirable that expression should be too periodic, it is equally undesirable that it should be too loose. A loose sentence is one which ends in a modifying or in a conditioning clause; *e. g.* :

We came to our journey's end at last.

How much is this worth for exportation, if gold is at a premium of fifty per cent.?

There can be no objection to such writing in moderation; it gives a relief from the tension of periodic sentences. Yet, in any case, to end a sentence with a number of modifiers makes it limp badly; *e. g.* :

We came to our journey's end at last, with no small difficulty, after much fatigue, through deep roads and bad weather.

This can be improved in various ways; *e. g.* :

At last, after much fatigue, through deep roads and bad weather, we came, with no small difficulty, to our journey's end.

Here all the modifiers are retained, merely arranged in a different order. But why retain so many? Every writer must trust somewhat to his reader's imagination. There is no need of *saying* more than this:

Worn out with deep roads and bad weather, we came at last to our journey's end.

93. Unity and Stability of Structure.—By this is here meant that the grammatical relation of subject, verb, and object is not unnecessarily changed. Note, in Burke, § 5 (second extract), how the structure is maintained throughout the long sentence: "The objects are to secure," etc.

The sense of strength produced by such a sentence is due to the ease and precision with which the reader is able to follow the writer. The thought unfolds itself without haste and without break. Contrast the following:

Carlyle is particularly happy in the choice of illustrative figures of speech, and *they* give clearness and vigor to his style.

Here the reader's mind is forced to jump from one subject and verb (*Carlyle is*) to another (*they give*); see re-

marks on *and*, § 90. The expression would be bettered, but not wholly cured, by substituting *which* for *and they*. But to be truly forcible, the sentence should be re-written, perhaps thus :

By his peculiarly happy choice of illustrative figures of speech Carlyle gives to his style clearness and vigor.

The following is weak :

Seeing the venomous reptile so near her, she started back, shuddered, and a low tremulous cry *was uttered*.

Only a slight change is needed: "*and uttered* a low tremulous cry."*

In the following :

So closely is the individual citizen connected with the government that any one of us, old or young, who may think of some plan by which the welfare of the people would be promoted, may form his ideas into a bill and send it to his representative in Congress, *and it may be enacted* into a law of the land.

the subject shifts from *any one may* to *it may*. The force would be increased by restoring the first subject; *e. g., and send it* (better, *the bill*) to his representative . . . *and get it enacted*, etc.

In the following quotation the *grammatical* structure is not changed, but nevertheless the form of expression is unnecessarily varied, producing a discouraging sense of tameness:

As distinctly as Mr. R—— is at the head of the men, so is Miss W—— *the premier lady player*.

Why could not the writer have said simply *at the head of the ladies*? Besides, *premier* is a French affectation (see § 105), and *lady* is not the correlative of *man*, but of *gentleman*. Compare such tameness with Macaulay's direct boldness :

Homer is not more decidedly the first of heroic poets, Shakespeare is not more decidedly the first of dramatists, Demosthenes is not more decidedly the first of orators, than Boswell is the first of biographers.

* Genung, *Outlines of Rhetoric*, p. 203.

We cannot learn too soon or too thoroughly that *similarity of thought implies similarity of expression*. To vary the expression without changing the nature of the thought is *mere vacillation*.

Unity does not imply that the sentence has only one subject and one predicate. A sentence may have two or more subjects, or two or more predicates, and yet be strictly a unit, provided the several clauses be correlated and mutually dependent. Thus a Complex or a Compound Sentence is no less unified than a Simple Sentence. *E. g. :*

The stranger gazed about the room. (Simple.)

He valued his royal crown chiefly because *it* was composed of precious metal. (Complex.)

Once upon a time there *lived* a very rich man and he had a little daughter. (Compound.) *

By Unity is meant such an arrangement of the parts of a sentence that they form *one organized whole*, and make upon the mind *one homogeneous impression*.

94. Brevity.—This is the prime requisite of force. By brevity is meant the avoidance of Tautology, Pleonasm (Redundancy), and Circumlocution.

Tautology consists in repeating, with a mere change of wording, what has been said already. Thus, when Tillotson writes :

The arts of *deceit* and *cunning* do continually grow weaker and less *effectual* and *serviceable* to them that use them.

he is tautological; *deceit* is the same as *cunning*, *effectual* is the same as *serviceable*.

The bill was carried unanimously *by the votes of all present*.

is an example of gross tautology.

Johnson's couplet in *The Vanity of Human Wishes*,

Let Observation, with extensive view,
Survey mankind from China to Peru,

has been frequently cited; *extensive view, mankind, from*

* Harper and Burgess, *Inductive Studies in English Grammar*, p. 52.

China to Peru, all express the same thought, viz. *extensively*.

Writers unfamiliar with Greek and Latin are apt to be tautological in coupling a word of classical with one of native origin; *e. g.*, *boldness* and *audacity*, *prominent* and *leading*.

Sometimes the tautology, if less obvious, is none the less actual; *e. g.* :

An *air of settledness* and abiding, which is very reposeful to the spirit of man in these restless days, although this *tranquil atmosphere* has its dangers too.

Here *tranquil atmosphere* says nothing essentially different from *air of settledness*. The thought might be expressed briefly :

An air of . . . days, yet which has its dangers too.

Pleonasm (Redundancy) consists in using wholly superfluous words; *e. g.* :

They returned *back again* to the *same city from* whence they had come *forth*.

Here the five italicized words are pleonastic. Also :

The boy had his pockets full of *a great many* apples.

The house was *densely crowded with an immense number of* people.

In the following the pleonasm is less obvious :

His family were very urgent for him to go to Margate.

Urgent scarcely needs *very* (§ 89), and *were urgent for him to go* is lame. A simple structure would have been more forcible :

His family urged him to go to Margate.

Certain words and phrases are frequently pleonastic; *e. g.*, the present participle *being*, and *there is*, *there are* :

Being content with deserving a triumph, he refused the honor of it.

There is nothing *which* so soon perverts the judgment.

There are many persons who deny this.

The above sentences would be improved by omitting the italicized words.

The words *persons* and *people* are frequently pleonastic, as in the phrases *many persons*, *few people*, etc.

Circumlocution. The nature of this fault is best explained by a few examples. In circumlocution the *sun* becomes the *lamp of day*, or the *radiant orb of day*; *women* become the *fair sex* or the *gentler sex*; *teeth* become *dental organs*; a *man hung for murder* becomes a *malefactor launched into eternity*. When a child is born, it is *ushered into existence*. When a barn is burned, it is *consumed by the devouring element*.

An English poet of the eighteenth century converted the humble *caterpillar* into:

The crawling scourge that smites the leafy plain.

and other poets of his day achieved similar feats. Circumlocution was in truth a fashion of eighteenth-century poetry.

In our nineteenth century the poets at least are usually free from the vice, but the prose-writers, all but the very best, are not. Many an author whose talent and training should have kept him safe has been misled by the evil example of "padded" sensational newspaper articles. Long words and indirect phrases appear in the eyes of the multitude more elegant than short direct expression. Yet the true principle abides, that the short and direct is the strong. When a man works in the garden, he uses a *spade* or a *hoe*; in the field he uses a *plough* or a *harrow*. The census, it is true, sums up these and like tools under the head of *Agricultural Implements*. But the census does not aim at force; rather at *comprehensiveness*.

Much patient care is needed to eradicate the present vice of circumlocution. We should scrutinize closely all that we read, cultivating thereby the gift of detecting and condemning long empty phrases. Still more closely should we scrutinize all that we write. We should not let a sentence pass until we are satisfied that it is reduced to its most direct and simplest terms (see § 124).

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95. Climax.—This, like the balanced clause (§ 92), is forcible when used in moderation. A well-known example is Cæsar's boast, "Veni, vidi, vici," rendered by Shakespeare, in *Cymbeline*, "came, and saw, and overcame." Cicero, declaiming against Verres, employs the climax:

To bind a Roman citizen is an outrage; to scourge him is an atrocious crime; to put him to death is almost a parricide; but to put him to death by crucifixion—what shall I call it?

In De Quincey, § 6, note the force of the conclusion:

Fortitude more confirmed, resources of a maturer intellect, alleviations . . . from sympathizing affection.

In Webster, § 56:

He thinks the whole world sees it in his face, reads it in his eyes, and almost hears its workings in the very silence of his thoughts.

Anti-climax, *i. e.*, putting the weaker thought or sentiment last, is to be avoided except in humorous writing. There is more danger of anti-climax with only two stages than with a greater number. *E. g.*:

Such a derangement . . . must have reduced society to its first elements and led to a direct collision of conflicting interests.

The above is not only anti-climactic, but pleonastic. When society is reduced to its elements, what is there left? There is no need of calling elements *first*. *Collision* and *conflict* are also tautology, and the collision may be assumed to be direct. The entire sentence should be recast:

Such a derangement must have led to a conflict of interests and (eventually) reduced society to its elements.

A famous example of effective impromptu anti-climax, ironical in its effect, is found in Patrick Henry's speech:

Cæsar had his Brutus, Charles the First his Cromwell, and George the Third—

interrupted by the speaker's cry of "Treason! treason!" and George the Third—may profit by their example.

The following also is good:*

* Quoted in A. S. Hill's *Principles of Rhetoric*, p. 135.

When George the Fourth was still reigning over the privacies of Windsor, when the Duke of Wellington was prime minister, and Mr. Vincy was mayor of the old corporation in Middlemarch, etc.—GEORGE ELIOT: *Middlemarch*, ii., ch. xix.

96. Sustained Effect.—Brevity is wholly compatible with an occasional long sentence well constructed. (For alternation of long and short sentences in the Paragraph, see § 6.) The opposite of brevity is not *many* words, but *useless* words, verbiage. A long sentence perfectly clear in its grammatical relations, stating each position precisely and fully, summing up details for a general effect, has always been recognized as the completest embodiment of power. *E. g.*:

As long as our sovereign lord the king, and his faithful subjects the lords and commons of this realm,—the triple cord which no man can break; the solemn, sworn, constitutional frank-pledge of this nation; the firm guarantees of each other's being and each other's rights; the joint and several securities, each in its place and order, for every kind and every quality of property and of dignity,—as long as these endure, so long the Duke of Bedford is safe, and we are all safe together: the high from the blights of envy and the spoliation of rapacity; the low from the iron hand of oppression and the insolent spurn of contempt. —BURKE: *A Letter to a Noble Lord*, etc.

If discord and disunion shall wound it [American Liberty], if party strife and blind ambition shall hawk at and tear it, if folly and madness, if uneasiness under salutary and necessary restraint, shall succeed in separating it from that Union by which alone its existence is made sure, it will stand in the end by the side of that cradle in which its infancy was rocked; it will stretch forth its arm with whatever of vigor it may still retain over the friends who gather round it; and it will fall at last, if fall it must, amidst the proudest monuments of its own glory, and on the very spot of its origin.—WEBSTER: *Reply to Hayne*.

To get the full effect of Webster's eloquence, one should read the numerous short abrupt sentences immediately preceding the above.

The secret of success in passages like these from Burke and Webster lies in the impression which they create of the writer's or speaker's ability to maintain a protracted

sequence of thought and emotion. As in the physical, so also in the spiritual world, endurance is an acknowledged measure of strength.

97. Historical Present.—This is a device for giving, if not exactly force, at least vivacity to a narrative. It presupposes in the writer a vivid imagination, by the operation of which past events seem to be actually present. Within proper limits the device is effective. But these limits are usually transgressed by the young, who change from past to present and back to past without motive or justification. *E. g.:*

The Romans now *turn* aside in quest of provisions. The Helvetians *mistook* the movement for retreat. They *pursue* and give Cæsar his chance, etc.*

At last the long-looked-for spring *appeared* . . . and we gladly *gave up* . . . winter amusements for our out-of-door sports. Again we *glide* in our swift shells . . . again we *play* ball . . . and *take* long evening strolls and *sit* by the open window, etc.†

School and college compositions and examination papers swarm with blunders like the above. The writers seem to look upon the historical present as an indispensable ingredient in all narration, something to be forced in when other resources fail. They are evidently not aware that it is an ingenious device, requiring *the utmost tact*.

The evil will be greatly diminished by the observance of a few practical rules.

1. The historical present presupposes a vivid imagination. Are you sure that you possess such an imagination? Are you really aglow over this particular passage, do you actually have a *vision* of the action and the actors? If you entertain the slightest doubt on these points, refrain from the present and keep to the soberer and safer preterite.

2. Do not mix up preterite and present in the same

* Genung, *Practical Rhetoric*, p. 113.

† A. S. Hill, *Foundations of Rhetoric*, p. 97.

paragraph. A good illustration of the observance of the rule is the extract from *The Outlook*, § 3.

3. Introduce and dismiss the historical present with some words of explanation. Dickens, who is much given to the device, is usually careful to mark the transitions. Thus, in giving a generalized narrative (see § 34) of David's life soon after the mother's second marriage, he begins:*

Let me remember how it used to be, and bring one morning back again.

I come into the second-best parlor after breakfast. . . . My mother is ready for me at her writing desk, etc.

And so on for two pages, all in the present tense. Then the end is marked:

It seems to me, at this distance of time, as if my unfortunate studies generally took this course, etc.—DICKENS: *David Copperfield*, i. ch. iv.

The whole ceremony of David's wedding with Dora (ii. ch. xv.), is narrated in the present; it is in form a retrospective vision.

Another writer much given to the device is Carlyle. His *French Revolution* is especially characterized by it. For most readers it is overdone, creating the impression of a mere vision rather than of sober historic actuality. The following extract, from Carlyle's article on Doctor Francia, is a sample of his more moderate style; it is a description of an army-march across the Andes:

Wayworn sentries with difficulty keep themselves awake; tired mules chew barley rations or doze on three legs; the feeble watch-fire will hardly kindle a cigar; Canopus and the Southern Cross glitter down; and all snore steadily, begirt by granite deserts, looked on by the Constellations in that manner.

With this compare the extract from Homer, § 44. The final clause, *in that manner*, exemplifies Carlyle's fondness for loose sentence-structure, § 92.

* Quoted in Genung's *Practical Rhetoric*, p. 113.

CHAPTER XI.

PROPRIETY.

By Propriety of expression is here meant the avoidance of whatever might offend a reader of cultivated taste. Under this general heading are two sections: Purity, or the avoidance of incorrect words and phrases; Euphony, or the avoidance of what is harsh to the ear.

PURITY.

98. The vocabulary of every language contains certain expressions which are not admissible in good writing. Some of them are positively bad; others are merely under suspicion, not being fully recognized by literary authorities. The young writer should avoid both classes.

English, to be standard, should have three properties. It should be national, present, reputable; national, as opposed to local or provincial; present, as opposed to obsolete; reputable, as opposed to newly-coined or vulgar.

National.—In England there are certain local modes of speech, an inheritance from the remote past, which are called dialects. Thus, there is the Yorkshire dialect, the Lincolnshire dialect, etc. But the local differences of English speech in the United States, although recognizable, do not quite constitute dialects in the strict philological sense of that term. Perhaps they may be called provincialisms. But, under whatever name, these local peculiarities are to be avoided in writing.* It is not good

* There can be no objection, of course, to such compositions as Lowell's *Biglow Papers*, the stories by Charles Egbert Craddock, *Uncle Remus*, and the like, compositions which profess to reproduce the speech of a certain district.

expression to say : he *conducted* well, for he *conducted himself* well ; or *powerful* tired, for *very* tired. At times there is difficulty in deciding what is a provincialism. Thus, in the United States, of the two words *bucket* and *pail*, one is favored in the West, the other in the East. Both words are old, being found in the language before the Norman Conquest, and both are used in literature. Neither one is likely to become obsolete as long as *The Old Oaken Bucket* and *Jack and Gill* are known to boys and girls.

In England, by reason of the literary ascendancy of London, Oxford, and Cambridge, it is not difficult to draw the line between national and dialectic. The speech of the educated classes in the capital and in the two university towns is the national speech. In the United States, where there is less centralization and greater commercial and political rivalry, we must be less confident. Nevertheless, we can scarcely err in accepting as standard the diction of that long line of noted writers which began with Irving and ended with Holmes.

Between England and the United States there is a difference of vocabulary. In England an *elevator* is called a *lift* ; a *railroad* is a *railway* ; the *rails* themselves are called *metals* ; the *cars* are *carriages* ; the *ticket-office* is the *booking-office* ; the train is not *switched* but *shunted* ; *baggage* is called *luggage* ; our *baggage-checks* are not in use in England, but the English name for them is *brasses* ; the *engineer* of a train is the *engine-driver*, and the *fireman* is the *stoker*. A *store* is usually called a *shop* ; *twenty-five* is usually *five-and-twenty*. Instead of *betting*, an Englishman usually *lays* a guinea, a shilling, etc.

In these and hundreds of similar divergences of vocabulary it would be pedantry or Anglomania to urge Americans to substitute the foreign term for the native. The latter has become sanctioned through long use, literary, legal, and commercial. Only one word of the above seems to call for the change, viz. *engineer*. Such a designation

ought to be reserved for the professional man who designs structures, the civil engineer. The man who merely drives an engine ought not to be called engineer.

99. Present.—Obsolete words and phrases are not often a source of danger to the prose-writer. Very few at the present day would be tempted to use *perchance*, *peradventure*, *haply* for *perhaps*; *eke* for *also*; *verily* for *truly*, *really*; in *sooth* for in *truth*. The verb *eke*, in the phrase *to eke out*, is still current. *Furthermore* is hardly to be treated as obsolete, or even as obsolescent.* *Hight*, *swain*, *wight* are permissible only in humorous prose.

Thou, *thee*, *thine*, verbal forms of the second person singular, and verbal forms of the third singular in *-eth*, are now used only in poetry or in prose of an exalted cast. Thus Carlyle:

Poor wandering, wayward man! Art thou not tried, and beaten with stripes, even as I am. . . . O my Brother, my Brother! Why cannot I shelter thee in my bosom and wipe away all tears from thy eyes?

Forgotten, *only-begotten*, *ill-gotten* (gain), still retain the *-en*; but the uncompounded *gotten*, occasionally heard, sounds quaint or affected. *Worn*, formed after the analogy of *born*, *torn*, etc., has supplanted the earlier and correcter weak form *wearied*.

The diction of the King James Bible translation and of Shakespeare having become the common property of all English-speaking persons, we are familiar with many words and phrases that have ceased to be current. We should be on our guard, therefore, against imitating them in our own writing. To echo the archaisms of Shakespeare suggests literary pedantry, to echo biblical archaisms suggests religious pedantry.

100. Reputable.—Newly-coined words are sometimes called Neologisms. This term, however, designates also the employment of a well-established word in a novel

* So treated in Genung, *Practical Rhetoric*, p. 39.

sense. The present and succeeding sections treat of Neologisms and also of words borrowed from foreign languages.

Neologisms in General. No precise rule can be given for the use or avoidance of neologisms. Some of them, *e. g.*, the verb *enthuse*, or *predicate* in the sense of *affirm*, *predict*, are so crude and barbarous as to fall under the head of vulgarisms or slang. Others deserve at least respectful treatment, and still others will doubtless become standard English.

It is impossible to predict the fate of a neologism. But there are one or two tests by which we may estimate its chances of survival. First, is it formed according to the analogy of other words of its class? Second, does it supply a real want, or does it merely duplicate another word already established?

Thus, since the substitution of electricity for hanging in capital punishment, the need has arisen of a new term for the new method. Various neologisms have been proposed, chiefly *electrocide* and *electrocute*. *Electrocide* looks like *homicide*, *regicide*, *tyrannicide*, but there is a fundamental difference. Whereas the last three mean the killing (or killer) of a man, of a king, of a tyrant, *electrocide* is intended to mean killing *by means of* electricity. Thus the formation is not analogous. *Electrocution* is still worse. It looks like *execution*; but this latter is not compounded of *exe-* and *-cution*: it goes back ultimately to the Latin *ex-sequi*. Moreover, *electrocide*, when used at all, is used as a verb, from which is formed the past participle *electrocided*. What then shall be the noun? Shall it be *electrocision*? This would wrongly suggest the analogy of *ex-cision*, "cutting out." Both neologisms seem doomed to failure.

An interesting example of recent coinage, one likely to remain, is the verb *boycott*. It is formed from the name of a Captain Boycott, the person to whom the now familiar process was first applied, about 1880.

The formation of new compound words is controlled by one general principle, viz. that both parts of the compound should be of the same language. Thus in *telegram* both *tele-* and *-gram* are Greek; the same is true of *telegraph*. But in *cablegram* the *cable-* part is French; therefore the compound is objectionable.

Yet there are a few old words compounded from different languages; *e. g.*, *piecemeal*, made up of the French *piece* and *meal*, from the Anglo-Saxon *mælum*, a dative plural used to form adverbs of manner.

Certain classes of neologisms should be treated separately.

101. Verbs Formed from Standard Nouns. *E. g.*, *to cable*, *to wire*, *to umpire*, etc. Fastidious critics object to all or nearly all such verbs. This is scarcely justifiable. If the verb *to telegraph*, *i. e.*, to send a message by means of the telegraph, has become good English only in the last thirty or forty years, it is hard to see why *to cable*, in the sense of to send a message by cable, should not be equally recognized. It meets a practical demand. But there is less need of *to wire*; it is a mere doublet of *to telegraph*.

Shall we say, "B. *umpired* the game impartially"? Most critics reject the verb *to umpire*. But, in the present craze for athletic sports, the word is likely to become standard. It is convenient; like *battery*, for pitcher and catcher. In legal speech, *to referee* a case is fairly established; certainly, "*to deed* away property," "*the property was deeded to A.*," are no longer questioned. But *to clerk*, *to clerk it*, in the sense of to act as clerk, will scarcely be accepted. *To sculp*, *i. e.*, to model a statue, is unpardonably vulgar.

To suicide and *to duel* are still rejected by the fastidious, with a possible chance of acceptance. *To burglarize* has no such chance. *To interview* will probably last as long as the practice itself.

102. Abbreviations. Some have already established them-

selves; *e. g.*, *mob*, from *mobile vulgus*; *cab*, from *cabriolet*; *hack*, from *hackney*. But in general the language is intolerant of abbreviations. *Photo* for photograph has not been accepted. Such abbreviations as *gents*, *pants*, *prof.* (for professor), *doc.* (for doctor), *cap.* (for captain), an *invite* (for invitation), a *combine* (for combination), *diff.* (for difference), are hopelessly vulgar. *Postal* for postal card and *editorial* for editorial article are fairly established in this country; in England the terms are *post-card* and *leader*. (See § 98.)

Exam. and *prelim.* are still college slang.

Abbreviations like *isn't*, *doesn't*, *didn't*, *I'll*, *he'll* are permissible in conversation, but not in writing, except such writing as reproduces conversation. *Don't* (for does not), *ain't*, *shan't*, *won't* are not permissible at all.

103. Useless Words. These are to be rejected because they are useless; many of them are also formed incorrectly. Among the useless and incorrect are *illy*, *firstly*, *thusly*. The persons who use such spurious adverbs forget that *ill*, *first*, *thus* are already adverbs. *Muchly* is also vulgar.

Some years ago there was a craze in the United States for nouns in *-ist*, to designate the doer of an act. The termination is proper in certain Greco-Latin and French formations, *e. g.*, *thaumaturgist*, *revolutionist*, *druggist*, *chemist*, etc., but is wholly improper in native words, the termination of which should be *-er*. Yet, although the language had already an ample supply of *-er* nouns, the craze did not stop until it had produced the monstrosities *walkist*, *talkist*, *fightist*, *skatist*, etc. But the craze is dying out, and the monstrosities are dropping one by one into oblivion.

104. Misused Words. Thus far only new formations have been discussed with regard to their probable acceptance or rejection. In the present section old well-established words are discussed in their misapplication. Sometimes the misapplication is common in the United States, sometimes it is local.

To fix, which properly means to fasten or make permanent (as when the photographer fixes his negative), is misused in the sense of to mend or repair; even in the sense of to put in order, as in the phrase "*to fix up things*." *Mad*, properly meaning insane, is misused in the sense of angry. *Leave* and *let* are discriminated in good English; but from the uneducated one often hears the expression, "*Leave me be*." *To allow*, in the sense of to declare or assert, is perhaps Western rather than Eastern. But *to claim*, in the same improper sense, is heard in both sections. Properly, *to allow* is to grant or concede, and *to claim* is to demand as a right. *To confess*, which properly means to state explicitly one's own shortcoming, is often misused, even by writers who should know better, in the general sense of to admit or concede something which may be either good or bad, in one's self or in others; *e. g.*, "It must be *confessed* that a small college offers certain advantages which a large university cannot offer." When an enthusiastic undergraduate asserts that his college is the *peer* of American colleges, he intends to say that it is the *best*; in reality he says merely that it is one of many *equal* in rank and excellence.

To materialize, which properly means to put into material form, or to assume material form, is misused in the sense of to make one's appearance, or simply to come. "He was invited, but failed to *materialize*" is downright slang. Also, "he failed to put in an appearance."

Calculated, in the sense of likely, is not elegant, although it has the sanction of Goldsmith and Hawthorne. *To favor*, in the sense of to resemble, "John favors his father," is provincial. *Plenty*, as an adverb, *e. g.*, "*plenty* good enough," is ungrammatical. *Some*, for somewhat, slightly, as in "I was *some* tired," is slang.

In the use of certain verbs with the reflexive pronoun there seems to be a difference between England and the United States. In England the correct form is, "The Ohio

empties *itself* into the Mississippi ;” but with us few writers, if any, would hesitate to say, “The Ohio empties into the Mississippi.” On the other hand, many writers in England use *trouble* without the reflexive, *e. g.*, “What the public may think, I do not greatly *trouble* to learn,” whereas the usual American phrase would be “*trouble myself*.” “He *qualified himself* for office by taking the oath” is the only acknowledged form in England and also among careful American writers. But the form without the reflexive is evidently gaining ground with us. *He conducts*, for he *conducts himself*, is still provincial.

The use and disuse of the reflexive pronoun is a question for English historical grammar rather than for rhetoric. It is extremely difficult and has not yet been adequately treated.

105. Foreign Words. The excessive use of foreign words is a symptom either of pedantry or of snobbishness, or at least of unfamiliarity with the resources of the mother tongue.

At one time cultivated writers and speakers in England and America were much given to quoting Latin words and phrases and trite passages from Cicero, Virgil, and Horace. The fashion has died out, but its place has been taken by the fashion of French words and expressions. Mrs. Smith prefers to be *Madame* S. ; if she desires to give her maiden name, she is *née* Jones. One’s betrothed is a *fiancé* or *fiancée* (if the genders are not confounded). To be present at a ceremony is *to assist*. A matter of course is something that *goes without saying*. The influenza that has troubled the world so much of late is the *grippe*, or still worse, *la grippe*. A street urchin is a *gamin*.

It would be easy to multiply examples: the society-columns of the newspapers overflow with them. Occasionally we get even an Italianism, as when a noted statesman passing his vacation at his country residence is described as *making his villegiatura*. *

Foreign words have already been naturalized by the thousand. There can be no objection to the naturalization of many more, provided the newcomers are genuine additions and do not merely supplant older and better terms. Thus it is proper to call the peculiar Australian weapon by its foreign name of *boomerang*, our language not having a native equivalent. The same may be said of hundreds and thousands of Anglo-Indian, Australian, or South American names of things foreign to England and North America. In the United States many Indian words have become current, *e. g.*, *succotash*, *wampum*, *sachem*, *totem*, etc.

Furthermore, every language has certain abstract terms which defy translation, *e. g.*, the French *esprit*, the German *Gemüth*. A writer discussing French or German manners is permitted to use such words in moderation. But in discussing Anglo-American manners we should be able to express the thoughts back of such words by approaching the subject from the Anglo-American side. Even in writing upon foreign matters, the excessive use of foreign phraseology is a sign of the writer's poverty of expression. Authors thoroughly conversant with two countries and their literatures, like P. G. Hamerton in his essays upon life in France, have no serious difficulty in keeping the languages separate. The purity of Hamerton's English is in marked contrast with writing of this sort:

As a result, it [Conway's book on *Climbing in the Himalayas*] has a freshness, a *pleinairiste* buoyancy and atmosphere, usually conspicuous by their absence in works of the kind.

Pleinairiste may be a perfectly legitimate French adjective from *plein air*, "open air." But would not *open-air* have answered as an English equivalent? And if so, what is the difference between *air* and *atmosphere*? Doubtless the writer of the above believed that he was penning something brilliant and "incisive." In reality he would have

been more expressive, and also more English, had he written simply :

has an open-air freshness and buoyancy.

106. In strictness, grammar is a study independent of rhetoric. But a few inaccuracies, which are on the border line, may be mentioned here.

Some sort of a, what sort of a, etc. The *a* is superfluous. The indefinite article points to a single object, whereas in such expressions we are trying to generalize, and should therefore say, "What sort of book have you?" etc.

Those sort of. This is still worse, yet one hears it frequently in conversation; *e. g.*, "All those sort of things." The only grammatical phrasing is, "All that sort of thing."

They, them, their in the singular construction. The expressions *they say, they do*, and the like, in which *they* is an indefinite pronoun standing for persons in general, are perfectly grammatical and well established. But it is not correct to use *they* as the pronoun for *anybody, somebody*. A signal blunder of this sort is made by Ruskin, § 22:

What wits anybody had became available to *them* again.

Why did not Ruskin write *him*? There seems to be a reluctance in certain writers to use the singular pronoun, because it must specify gender, whereas the plural is ambiguous. But such reluctance is mere squeamishness. English and all other languages have always employed the masculine for both genders. *E. g.* :

Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? Are not his days also like the days of a hireling?

One, as an indefinite pronoun, equivalent to the French *on*, the German *man*, is less used in the United States than in England; *e. g.*, "One does not often hear Wagner's music perfectly rendered." But what possessive adjective are we to use with *one*? And may we change from *one* to

another pronoun in the same sentence? In England the proper expressions are:

If *one* wishes to hear Wagner's music perfectly rendered, *one* must attend the Baireuth festival.

One should be careful in choosing *one's* friends.

In the United States usage is less strict; we hear and read, in such constructions, "*he* must attend," "*his* friends." The English usage is more consistent.

Cleft Infinitive. By this is meant the insertion of an adverb or modifying clause between *to* and the infinitive. The construction is condemned by many grammarians and rhetoricians. Yet it is found in some of our best prose-writers; *e. g.*, "to fairly unite" (Matthew Arnold); "to ardently desire" (Sydney Smith); "to barely rise" (Cardinal Newman); "to first take" (George Eliot).^{*} There seems to be no valid objection to the moderate use of the cleft infinitive, especially if the adverbial expression be short and simple. But "to fashionably and carelessly look in at Tattersall's" is evidently newspaper English.

Shall, will. To discriminate properly between these expressions of futurity is at times puzzling. The root of the difficulty lies in the circumstance that neither verb had a future sense originally. Our language began without a future tense. "*I shall* do" meant I am under obligation to do; "*I will* do" meant I intend to do. And traces of these original meanings still survive in each verb. Thus, "Thou shalt not steal" means Thou art under obligation to God not to steal; "I will succeed" means that I am resolved to succeed. But in England since the sixteenth century *shall*, as an expression of simple futurity, has become almost restricted to the first person, and *will* has become the future for the second and third persons. Hence the future paradigm, "I shall go, he will go, we shall go, they will go," etc. Yet it is perfectly correct to say, "If

^{*} See F. Hall, *Nation*, April 13, 1893.

you satisfy me, I *will* reward you handsomely." Here *will* expresses both futurity and purpose.

To say, "He shall go, you shall go," implies confidence on the part of the speaker that the person spoken of or addressed cannot do otherwise than go. Observe the propriety and confidence of this assertion: "You shall forgive me—I will compel it," and the absurdity of this: "I will drown, if nobody shall help me."

In America the usual error consists in using *I will, we will*, for *I shall, we shall*, where the idea is that of mere futurity. *E. g.* :

By starting at once we *will* have time enough.

If I give satisfaction to my employers, I *will* get an increase of salary.

I *will* go to Chicago next week. [Nine times out of ten the form expresses merely expectation or probability.]

Hence the direction: Learn to use *I shall, we shall*, and refrain from *I will, we will*, unless you wish to state a clearly-conceived purpose.

At one point the usage of England is inconsistent, viz. in the interrogative form: "Shall you go to town next week?" instead of "Will you." Various explanations have been attempted, but they do not explain. Americans can only accept the form as a fact hard to reconcile with the other fact that the same Englishmen say: "You will be there, will you not?"

The conditional forms *should* and *would* are not quite parallel with the indicative *shall* and *will*. As mere conditionals, *I should, he would*, correspond to *I shall, he will*, *i. e.*, they observe the distinction between the first person and the second and third. But, in addition to this, *should* is used in all three persons to express an obligation or a supposition; *e. g.*, "I should write" may either mean I ought to write, or it may be the mere conditional corresponding to I shall write, or it may be a supposition, as in these three sentences:

I should write home. (Obligation.)

I should write home to-day, if I had the time. (Condition.)

Should I write at once, the letter would get there in time. (Supposition.)

He should write home. (Obligation.)

He would write home to-day, if he had the time. (Condition.)

Should he write at once, the letter would get there in time. (Supposition.)

Would is also used idiomatically in all three persons, to express habit, in such phrases as, "*I would* often say," "*He would* often say."

May, can. These words are frequently confounded, although the distinction is clear.

Can denotes physical or mental ability, as, "I can walk," meaning I am able to walk; "I can sing," meaning I know how to sing.

May expresses contingency, wish, permission, as, "The young may die, but the old must," "May you live long and happily!"

Consequently, in asking permission to do something, the proper word is *may*. *E. g.* :

Father, please, *may* I take the horse this afternoon?

May I have the pleasure of your company?

EUPHONY.

As here employed, the term denotes the avoidance not only of harsh combinations of sound but also of awkward constructions.

107. Words correct in themselves do not perhaps combine smoothly. *E. g.* :

I *can candidly* say, etc.

I confess with *humility* the *debility* of my judgment.

In order to protect himself against such blunders the writer should acquire the habit of reading his manuscript *aloud*. The above are easily remedied; *e. g.*, *Let me candidly* say; . . . the *weakness* of my judgment.

The letter *s*, especially in such combinations as *sp*, *st*, *sk*, produces harshness when it occurs too frequently. *E. g.* :

After the *most straitest* sect of our religion.

They *sometimes so swathe* the peaks with light as to abolish their definition.—TYNDALL, § 57.

This might be changed to :

At times they swathe the peaks with light so (effectually) as to abolish their definition.

In general, the number of consonants should not be disproportionate to the number of vowels. *E. g.* :

What strange *vamped* comedies.—GOLDSMITH.

In *strange vamped* there are only two vowel to nine consonant sounds.

Another blunder to be avoided is the repetition of a sound in words of different meaning, with the effect of an unintentional pun. *E. g.* :

In the twinkling of an *eye* I came to an adamantine resolution.—DE QUINCEY, § 82.

An ambition of being foremost at a *horse course*.—GOLDSMITH.

Was *course* for *race* common in Goldsmith's day?

The great poets are strict observers of the principles of euphony. Occasionally, it is true, there is a harsh line in Shakespeare, Milton, Tennyson. But nearly always this harshness is intended to correspond to the underlying thought or sentiment. *E. g.* :

The nimble, wild, red, wiry, savage king.—TENNYSON: *Harold*, iv. 1.

Here the halt necessary between every two adjectives makes the sneer more pointed.

Prose-writers, as a class, are less observant of euphony, partly because their sense of beauty is less acute, partly because they write for the eye rather than for the ear. Even an author who is both poet and prose-writer, Goldsmith for instance, may forget his poetical instincts when writing prose, and put together such a phrase as "horse

course," a phrase which the same Goldsmith would not have used in *The Deserted Village*. But the prose-writer is not excused from obeying the simpler rules of euphony. Although his writings are chiefly for the eye, they may be read aloud; and if they contain harsh or absurd combinations of sound, they will offend the ear.

108. Certain chronic blunders may be noted. One consists in heaping up adverbs in *-ly* and participles, or participial nouns, in *-ing*. *E. g.* :

They worked equally *assiduously*.

It is becoming more *puzzling* than ever.

These are easily changed to: "with equal assiduity;" "it becomes," etc.*

Another chronic blunder is the overuse of *but* (see § 91). When a traveller in Egypt writes to a London newspaper:

But these coins are *but* a part of the treasures discovered at, etc.

we can afford to be lenient with him, on the ground that letters of travel are usually written in haste and without careful revision. When George Eliot, however, writes, in *Silas Marner*, ch. xii. (paragraph-ending):

But her arms had not yet relaxed their instinctive clutch; and the little one slumbered on as gently as if it had been rocked in a lace-trimmed cradle.

But the complete torpor came at last . . . [a long paragraph ending with the sentence] . . . *But* presently the warmth had a lulling effect and the little golden head sank down on the old sack, and the blue eyes were veiled by their delicate half-transparent lids.

But where was Silas Marner while this strange visitor had come to his hearth? . . .

we must protest energetically against such abuse.

On the other hand, the desire to avoid awkward repetition should not lead us into the error of merely varying words without changing the sense. *E. g.* :

* A. S. Hill, *Foundations of Rhetoric*, p. 256.

What is true of New York is *likewise to be found* in Boston.

John tried to milk one cross cow while the men were *at work on* the other *animals*.

Why not write directly and boldly :

What is true of New York is *true also* of Boston.

John tried to milk one cross cow while the men were milking the *other cows*.

Great writers repeat nouns, adjectives, and verbs with a view to clearness, directness, and force. It is only the timid and ignorant who believe it necessary to vary the expression without changing the thought. Note the following repetitions :

Coleridge, § 3—*theory*.

Macaulay, § 3—*best parts of his mind, worst parts of his mind*.

De Quincey, § 10—*sometimes*.

Burke § 13 (first extract)—*when ; mode ; all their ; ground of*.

De Quincey, § 31—*from, as from*.

Macaulay, § 53—*faults*.

Matthew Arnold, § 53—*catchword ; absolute, absolutely ; demonstration ; certain*.

Matthew Arnold, § 56—*instinct ; preponderant action*.

Webster, § 56—*confessed, confession*.

Burke, § 56—*convention*.

Webster, § 57—*motive*.

St. Paul, § 58—*charity*.

Burke, § 126—*grown, growth ; increased, increase*.

[The change from *reconcilable* to *reconcilable with* is in Burke a blemish.]

CHAPTER XII.

FIGURATIVE EXPRESSION.

109. FIGURATIVE expression may be loosely defined (see § 50) to be a deviation from the literal, straightforward way of statement. It is not correct to assert that the deviation is always intentional, for the sake of a definite effect, since many of the commoner figures are employed by speakers and writers unconsciously. *E. g.*, when we say that the *kettle* boils, for the *water* in the kettle, or when we say that a man smokes his *pipe*, for the *tobacco* in the pipe, we are using the figure technically called metonymy. When we describe a fleet as consisting of thirty *sail*, or a factory as employing one hundred *hands*, putting the part (sail, hand) for the whole (ship, man), we are using synecdoche. But we are quite unconscious of speaking figuratively.

Rhetoricians have expended much ingenuity in classifying the numerous figures. But their efforts have scarcely brought much practical gain to the practical writer.

In the first place, the rhetorical classifications are not logical, but admit of cross-division (see § 52). *E. g.* :

Streaming grief his faded cheek bedewed.

Here *streaming grief* stands for *tears*, *i. e.*, cause for effect (metonymy). And to speak of grief (or tears) as *streaming* is metaphor, or at least simile. Additional instances of figures that can be classified under more than one head are noted in the following sections.

In the next place, although a poet or a prose-writer may employ figures more or less consciously, he does not em-

ploy them with conscious regard to the definitions and groupings of the rhetorician.

The following classification, which does not lay claim to theoretical perfection, will enable the student to understand and estimate the more usual figures at least.

We may group figures in two general classes: first, a class in which the figurative language changes the nature or relations of the actual object; second, a class in which the language changes the attitude of the speaker or writer toward the object. The first may be called Objective; the second, Subjective.

OBJECTIVE FIGURES.

110. Synecdoche; Metonymy; Hyperbole.—In these figures there is a change in the immediate surroundings of the actual object to be represented.

In *Synecdoche*: *a.* A part is put for the whole, or the whole for a part. *b.* An individual is put for the class, or the class for an individual. *E. g.:*

a. A fleet of thirty *sail* (*sail* for *ship*).

Paid my price in paltry *gold* (*gold* for certain coin made of gold).

b. Some mute inglorious *Milton* here may rest (*Milton* for poet in general).

He went to his *rest* (for he *died*; general for individual).

In *Metonymy*: *a.* Cause is put for effect, or effect for cause. *b.* Substance for quality (property), or quality for substance. *c.* Sign for thing signified. *d.* Time for persons or events. *e.* Place for persons or events. *E. g.:*

a. *Gray hairs* should be respected (for *old age*).

b. The *sun* dries the ground (for the *heat* of the sun).

Wealth counts its cattle (for *wealthy men*).

To be young was very *heaven* (for *happiness*).

His *Majesty* (for the *king*); his *Grace* (for the *duke*); your *Honor* (said to a *judge*), and many similar forms.

c. The *crescent* receded before the *cross* (for *Mohammedanism* and *Christianity*).

d. We have much to learn from *classical antiquity* (for *Greeks* and *Romans*).

e. The bench, the bar, the pulpit (for judges, lawyers, preachers).

All Europe and Africa fast asleep (Carlyle, § 44; for the inhabitants of Europe and Africa).

In *Hyperbole* the object (or its action) is magnified or diminished. Herein hyperbole is more akin to *synecdoche* than to any other figure; *e. g.*, Milton, describing the altercation between Death and Satan, says daringly:

So frowned the mighty combatants that *Hell*
Grew darker at their frown.—*Paradise Lost*, ii. 719.

The following is a diminishing hyperbole:

The front garden was no bigger than a napkin.

As a genuine figure, hyperbole can scarcely be said to exist, except in combination with simile, comparison, metaphor, personification, or some other figure. *E. g.*:

Behind them, like a giant of league-long strides, came hurrying the thunderstorm.—HAWTHORNE, § 41.

Her eyes . . . seemed like Artesian wells, down, down into the infinite.—HAWTHORNE, § 45.

Hyperbole is always exaggeration; but not every exaggeration is hyperbole. There is no hyperbole if the *figurative element* is lacking. Thus De Quincey's "eternal teapot" (§ 43) is humorous exaggeration, but not hyperbole. Also the entire passage from Macaulay (§ 53) is exaggeration in general, and the assertion that "all the vices of the gambler and of the beggar were blended with those of the author" is a specific exaggeration. But the language is not at all figurative. In hyperbole, moreover, the writer not only knows that he is distorting the truth, but even counts upon the reader's detecting the trick and allowing for it. Thus:

On this particular afternoon, so excessive was the warmth of Judge Pyncheon's kindly aspect that (such at least was the rumor about town) an extra passage of the water-carts was found essential, in order to lay the dust occasioned by so much extra sunshine!—HAWTHORNE, *Seven Gables*, ch. viii.

Here Hawthorne even anticipates the reader's disbelief by making, in the parenthetical clause, a sham apology. Whereas Macaulay, in § 53, is unconscious of exaggeration and really believes his estimate to be in every respect true and acceptable to the reader.

Viewed with reference to this element of *transparent insincerity*, Hyperbole might perhaps be treated as a form of Irony (§ 115).

III. Simile ; Comparison ; Contrast.—In these figures we change, not the nature or immediate surroundings of the object, but its relations.

Simile is the briefest and also the commonest of figures. It consists in likening the object to another object of a different class. *E. g. :*

He is as strong and courageous as a lion.

He is a lion in strength and courage.

They melted from the field, as snow,

When streams are swoln and south winds blow,

Dissolves in silent dew.—SCOTT: *Marmion*, vi. xxxiv.

Whereof our sun is but a porch-light.—CARLYLE, § 44.

Like a pale meteor. . . . As a dragon-fly wheels in its flight.—GEORGE ELIOT, § 43.

Our story, like an owl bewildered.—HAWTHORNE, § 27.

A little old rat of a pony.—IRVING, § 12.

Like a frost-bitten leaf in autumn.—IRVING, § 12.

Comparison differs from *Simile* in being more extended and carried farther into detail. Thus, the long concluding sentence in Macaulay (§ 3) is a comparison of Johnson to the genie of the bottle. Note also the comparison of Whig and Tory to man and serpent (Macaulay, § 18), and Hawthorne's comparison of a moral in a story to a pin run through a butterfly (§ 24).

Contrast may be characterized as a simile reversed, *i. e.*, one object is illustrated by means of its *difference* from another. *E. g. :*

Such a conqueror no streams of blood accompany ; in his train are no desolated fields.

as a description of the victory of truth over error.

In Simile and Comparison, as figures of speech, the two objects likened to each other cannot belong to the same class. If they do, we have what is called a *real* comparison, and not a figure. Thus, to say of a person that he sings like a nightingale is a real comparison, for both men and birds belong to the class of singing animals. So also to say of a man that he is as strong as Hercules is merely likening one human being to another. But when we say that music is "like the memory of joys that are past," we use a simile.

112. Metaphor; Allusion.—In *Metaphor* we directly substitute the action of one object for that of another. The two objects are so completely identified that we think only of the substitute and forget the original. *E. g. :*

Heaven saw fit to ordain, that the electric spark of liberty should be conducted, through you, from the New World to the Old.—WEBSTER, § 45.

Time had ploughed his venerable front.

The croaking and hollow tones of the old lady, and the pleasant voice of Phœbe, mingling in one twisted thread of talk.—HAWTHORNE, § 44.

Agitation frozen into rest by horror.—DE QUINCEY, § 31.

Held in holy passion still,

Forget thyself to marble.—MILTON: *Il Penseroso*.

Thralia [*i. e.*, Mrs. Thrale], a bright papilionaceous creature, whom the elephant [*i. e.*, Johnson] loved to play with and wave to and fro upon his trunk.—CARLYLE: *Boswell's Johnson*.

Our aery [*i. e.*, the royal family] buildeth in the cedar's top,
And dallies with the wind and scorns the sun.—*Richard III.*, i. 3, 264.

Metaphor is the figure by eminence of poets and of those prose-writers who stand nearest to the poets. Its boldness and directness give to it a peculiar force.

Allusion may be called a metaphor in disguise ; *e. g. :*

The self-seeking will betray his friend or brother with a Judas-kiss.

The Ariel [Johnson's spiritual nature] finds itself encased in the coarse hulls of a Caliban [Johnson's body].—CARLYLE: *Boswell's Johnson*.

Even in scientific writing of a popular cast allusion is not out of place; *e. g.* :

This is a new kingdom of science, this embryology, but you have to enter it through a strait gate and a narrow way. For here, unless a man stoop his head, he will bruise it; unless he enter silently, he will learn nothing. It is not nature revealed in a strong wind, or an earthquake, or a fire; it is the still small voice of the growing cells he must train his ears to hear.—PARKER, ch. v. p. 69.

113. Personification consists in attributing to inanimate objects the properties of animate. *E. g.* :

The gigantic monster is charmed into repose.—IRVING, § 10.

A Tudor

School'd by the shadow of death.—TENNYSON, § 38.

One meek yellow evening.—CARLYLE: *Sartor Resartus*, ii. ch. i.

Oxford Street, stony-hearted stepmother.—DE QUINCEY, § 6.

Armour rusting in his halls

On the blood of Clifford calls:

"Quell the Scot," exclaims the Lance—

"Bear me to the heart of France"

Is the longing of the Shield.

WORDSWORTH: *Brougham Castle*.

One of the most striking personifications is this, in Shakespeare's Sonnet xxxiii.:

Full many a glorious morning have I seen

Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,

Kissing with golden face the meadows green,

Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy.

Note also the personification of the ilex trees in Hawthorne, § 45.

When freshly used, *i. e.*, as the invention of the writer, personification is one of the most forcible figures. But many personifications have become so trite as to lose their force. Thus, when we speak of the sun as *he*, or of the

moon as *she*, we are not conscious of using figurative language. Death has been personified for so many centuries that Tennyson's "shadow of death" scarcely attracts attention. The same may be said of "the groaning of mighty trees," Stanley, § 23, and "the deep tones of the old church clock proclaimed that it was six o'clock," De Quincey, § 3.

SUBJECTIVE FIGURES.

114. Vision; Apostrophe; Prosopopeia.—In *Vision* the past, the future, or the remote is treated as if present in time or in place. Thus Cicero narrates one of the acts of cruelty of Verres:

The unhappy man . . . is brought before the wicked prætor. With eyes darting fury, and a countenance distorted with cruelty, he orders the helpless victim of his rage to be stripped and rods to be brought, etc.

Even more graphic is the following, from Webster's speech on the murder of Captain Joseph White:

The assassin enters, through the window already prepared, into an unoccupied apartment. With noiseless step he paces the lonely hall, etc.

In the above passages Vision does not differ essentially from the Historical Present, § 97, though the speaker's intensity renders the scene dramatic. But where the future or the remote is made present, we cannot speak of historical present. Much of the book of Ezekiel is a vision of the remote and the future. So also is the book of Revelation. *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* are in parts vision, and the *Pilgrim's Progress* is wholly an allegorical vision (see § 117).

Among modern prose-writers Carlyle is noted for his use of vision. In his historical writings he incessantly represents himself as present at the events, mingling with the actors as one of them, overhearing their words, divining their thoughts, and announcing their future acts. Thus

he recounts one of the stages in the Parliamentary war against Charles I.:

Basing is black ashes, then: and Langford is ours, the garrison "to march forth to-morrow at twelve of the clock, being the 18th instant." And now the question is, Shall we attack Dennington or not?

Apostrophe consists in addressing the absent as if present, or in addressing some one who may be actually present, but who is not the regular object of address. Cicero is much given to this figure. More than once in his speeches to the Senate he turns aside from the Senate to address Catiline; *e. g.*:

If now, Catiline, I should order you to be seized and put to death, etc.

Webster, in his Bunker Hill oration, turns aside from the main audience to apostrophize the survivors of 1775, present at the oration:

Venerable men! you have come down to us from a former generation.

and Lafayette, also present:

Sir. . . The occasion is too severe for the eulogy of the living. But, sir, your interesting relation to this country, etc.

The most remarkable passage, however, in the oration is that which commemorates General Warren, who fell at the battle of Bunker Hill. It is a combination of vision and apostrophe. At first Warren is summoned in vision, in the third person; he is then apostrophized directly in the second person:

But ah! Him! the first great martyr in this great cause! Him! the premature victim of his own self-devoting heart! Him! the head of our civil councils, and the destined leader of our military bands, whom nothing brought hither but the unquenchable fire of his own spirit! Him! cut off by Providence in the hour of overwhelming anxiety and thick gloom; falling ere he saw the star of his country rise; pouring out his generous blood like water, before he knew whether it would fertilize a land of freedom or of bondage!—how shall I struggle with the emotions that stifle the utterance of thy name! Our poor work may

perish ; but thine shall endure ! This monument may moulder away ; the solid ground it rests upon may sink down to a level with the sea ; but thy memory shall not fail ! Wheresoever among men a heart shall be found that beats to the transports of patriotism and liberty, its aspirations shall be to claim kindred with thy spirit !

In *Prosopopeia* the speaker personates another. The figure is rarely used in modern speech. It occurs in Cicero, *e. g.*, where Cicero introduces Milo as if speaking through his (Cicero's) lips :

Attend, I pray, hearken, O citizens ; I have killed Publius Clodius, etc.

On another occasion *prosopopeia* is combined with personification ; the Republic is the speaker and addresses Cicero :

What are you doing ? Are you suffering him [Catiline] whom you have found to be an enemy . . . to leave the city ? . . . Will you not order him to be imprisoned, condemned, and executed ?

115. Irony ; Doubt ; Interrogation.—*Irony* is a figure in which the literal signification of the words of the speaker or writer is the direct opposite of his real thought. *E. g.* :

No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you.—JOB xii. 2.

Well, this is our poor Warwickshire peasant [Shakespeare] . . . whom Sir Thomas Lucy, *many thanks to him*, was for sending to the treadmill.—CARLYLE: *Heroes and Hero Worship*.

A gentleman [the Devil] of so much worldly wisdom, who gives such admirable dinners, and whose manners are so perfect.—LOWELL, § 11.

In one of his outbursts Cicero calls Verres, who was a monster of rapacity, “the upright and honest prætor.” Note also the ironical use of *honorable* in Anthony's speech, *Julius Cæsar*, iii. 2. And see Hyperbole, § 110.

In *Doubt* the writer affects to be uncertain, in order to win greater confidence from the reader through sympathy. The reader, readily solving the doubt, is flattered into be-

lieving that he is really coming to the aid of the writer. Thus:

I am not sagacious enough to discover how this despotic sport . . . can be discriminated from the rankest tyranny.—BURKE, § 13.

The reader, also unable to discriminate the sport from tyranny, is flattered by the reflection that Burke's sagacity is not superior to his own. See also Webster, § 206.

But, O grief!
Where hast thou led me? I perhaps speak this
Before a willing bondsman.—*Julius Cæsar*, i. 3, 112.

Cassius knows where he is, and is certain that his interlocutor, Casca, is no bondsman. But he pathetically calls upon Casca to help him out of an affected perplexity.

In *Interrogation* a confident assertion or denial is put in the form of a question. *E. g.*:

Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man be more pure than his Maker?—JOB iv. 17.

Or Portia's speech to Brutus:

Think you I am no stronger than my sex,
Being so father'd and so husbanded?—*Julius Cæsar*, ii. 1, 297.

Interrogation of this sort is common, even in ordinary conversation.

116. Antithesis; Oxymoron.—*Antithesis* can scarcely be called a figure. It changes nothing in the nature or relations of the object, or in the writer's attitude to the object, but is merely an attempt to heighten the contrast between two objects or ideas by placing them close together in the sentence. *E. g.*:

The Puritans hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectator.—MACAULAY: *Comic Dramatists*. (See § 92.)

And be these juggling fiends no more believed,
That palter with us in a double sense;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope.—*Macbeth*, v. 8, 21.

Oxymoron has more of the nature of a true figure. It consists in coupling words that are incompatible in their ordinary literal sense. It might be called a logical hyperbole. *E. g.*:

His honour rooted in dishonour stood,
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true.

TENNYSON: *Lancelot and Elaine*.

Oxymoron is frequent in Elizabethan English. *E. g.*:

This senior-junior, giant dwarf, Dan Cupid.

Love's Labor's Lost, iii. 1, 182.

Beautiful tyrant, fiend angelical!
Dove-feathered raven! wolvisish-ravening lamb!
A damned saint, an honourable villain!

Romeo and Juliet, iii. 2, 75.

At present the figure is rarely used.

117. Allegory; Parable; Fable.—These are classified in some text-books of Rhetoric among the figures of speech. But they are not forms of *expression*, they are forms of *literature*, see § 1, *note*. In particular, they are forms of story-telling.

A *Parable* is a short story invented to embody a certain moral teaching. It is very short, without detail, and has only one or two characters; *e. g.*, the parable of the Prodigal Son, Luke xv. 11–32. The characters, although invented, are not symbolic, but representative, *i. e.*, they stand for real men and women.

A *Fable*, in the sense of an animal fable, is also a story invented to teach a moral. The characters are animals talking and acting like men and women. Sometimes, however, both animals and human beings are introduced. Examples are the fables of the Hare and the Tortoise, the Lion and the Mouse, the Ass and the Lap-dog, Burns's poem of *The Two Dogs*. A fable may be of some length, as Dryden's *Hind and Panther*, in which the hind stands for the Roman Catholic Church, and the panther for the Church of England.

An *Allegory* is harder to characterize. It has at least

three features: it is a story, though not necessarily a short one; it has a very obvious moral; its personages are symbolic rather than representative, *i. e.*, they stand, not so much for possible human beings, as for traits of human character. The best known English allegory is Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. It is introduced in the form of a vision:

As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a den, and laid me down to sleep; and as I slept I dreamed a dream. I dreamed and behold I saw a man clothed with rags, etc.

The man is Christian, who symbolizes the converted soul in its progress from doubt and sin to heavenly bliss. His neighbors are Obstinate and Pliable, his counsellor is Evangelist. He is much troubled by Mr. Legality and Mr. Worldly-Wiseman, etc. The story is too familiar to require further illustration. The student is merely requested to note that each personage bears the label of some virtue or some vice.

The Morality Plays of early English literature are in the main dramatized allegories. Thus, Skelton's play of *Magnificence*, written in the times of Henry VIII., symbolizes youthful extravagance, Magnificence, misled by Folly and Fancy, despite the remonstrances of Liberty, Felicity, and Measure. In adversity Magnificence is visited by Poverty, Despair, and Mischief, but is rescued by Good Hope, Redress, Sad Circumspection, and Perseverance.

USES OF FIGURATIVE EXPRESSION.

118. Figures may be used either for Clearness or for Force; but chiefly for Force. In truth, only one figure, simile-comparison, can be said to have the general effect of promoting clearness. Other figures stimulate more than they enlighten. They impose more labor upon the reader's imagination, though at the same time they increase its activity.

Simile and comparison promote clearness by illustrating something obscure or unfamiliar by means of something better known. Thus we make oratory more intelligible when we say that the orator plays upon his hearers as a musician plays upon the keys of a piano. Macaulay's comparison of the two great parties to a man and a serpent (§ 18) makes the condition of English politics in the eighteenth century more concrete and visible.

Metaphor, in distinction from simile, is a figure of force, not directly of clearness. Thus, when the dying York exclaims to the dead Suffolk:

Tarry, my cousin Suffolk!
My soul shall thine keep company to heaven:
Tarry, sweet soul, for mine, then fly abreast.—

Henry V., iv. 6, 17.

our intellect must first reduce the metaphor of one bird waiting for another, until the two may fly abreast, into the simile of two souls flying to heaven like two birds abreast, before the figure becomes intellectually clear. But the dramatist's genius supplies us with the energy for making such a reduction the affair of an instant.

Usually a figure is employed to elevate the object. But in humorous and satirical writing the effect is often intentionally degrading. Thus, compare:

The quality of mercy is not strained,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath.—*Merchant of Venice*, iv. 1, 181.

The sun had long since in the lap
Of Thetis taken out his nap;
And, like a lobster boiled, the morn
From black to red began to turn.

BUTLER: *Hudibras*, ii. 2, 31.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

119. 1. What are the criteria of a good figurative expression? It "should naturally grow out of the subject;

it should be pictorial, so as to substitute a symbol for a verbal sign; fresh enough to give the reader a pleasant surprise, but not so strange as to startle him; in harmony with the purpose and tone of the composition; and as brief as is compatible with clearness."*

This statement, at once clear and comprehensive, could scarcely be improved, except perhaps by substituting the word *image* (or *picture*) for *symbol*. The following suggestions are in good part a practical enforcement of the several requirements.

2. A figure should not present too much detail nor be long drawn out. Perhaps Macaulay's comparison (§ 18) offends in these respects. Certainly, when Young says of old age that it should:

Walk thoughtful on the silent, solemn shore
Of that vast ocean it must sail so soon;
And put good works aboard; and wait the wind
That shortly blows us into worlds unknown.

the exhortation to *put good works aboard* immediately suggests boxes and bales and other articles of an ordinary mercantile cargo. Contrast this with Tennyson's *Crossing the Bar*, in which the bar, the tide, the twilight, and the Pilot, briefly hinted, are all congruous and dignified, without a suggestion of the worldly.

3. Avoid mixed figures; *e. g.*:

I bridle in my struggling muse with pain,
That longs to launch into a bolder strain.

In the first line the muse is figured as a *horse*; in the second, as a *ship*.

The shot of the enemy mowed down our ranks with frightful rapidity. On every hand men and horses lay in universal carnage, like scattered wrecks on a storm-beaten shore.

First the men are *mowed down*, then they are *shipwrecked*.

* A. S. Hill, *The Principles of Rhetoric*, p. 98.

4. Do not couple closely the figurative and the literal, unless you wish to be humorous. *E. g.:*

Boyle was the father of chemistry and brother to the Earl of Cork.

Or this from Dryden:

I was sailing in a vast ocean, without other help than the pole-star of the ancients, and the rules of the French stage.

Ocean and *pole-star* are figurative; *rules of the French stage* is a literal statement.

5. Avoid worn-out similes. It is scarcely worth the while to say that a woman is as red as a rose, or as pale as a lily, or as pure as snow, or to describe the waves as mountain-high, or a horse as running with the swiftness of the wind.

6. Let your similes and comparisons be spontaneous; do not use a simile because you think you ought to, but because you feel yourself *impelled* to.

It has been often observed that the happiest similes are employed by two classes of persons diametrically opposite: the uneducated, and the highly educated.* The uneducated, *i. e.*, children, rustics, savages, are naïve. They speak only of what they have seen and felt. When they liken one object to another, it is because the likeness is evident, and the two objects are familiar to all men. For example, one need not be a philosopher to appreciate the Indian name of whiskey, *fire-water*. Technical figures, also, are highly expressive to the initiated, as when short-stop fumbles a *hot grounder*, or when No. 4 catches a *crab*. On the other hand, highly-trained writers have their own peculiar gift of vision. They detect likenesses which the ordinary mortal overlooks, but which are none the less actual. Hence they are at once original and forcible.

But the immature writer, having a vague idea that similes are somehow desirable, *hunts* for them. Or he

* For a skilful treatment of this point see Wendell, *English Composition*, p. 255.

half-remembers them, as they have been used by some original writer, and applies them inaptly to a different relation. Hence the advice to use very few similes. Nine out of ten can be well spared.

PART III.



SOME PRACTICAL FEATURES OF COMPOSITION.

INVENTION and EXPRESSION, as treated in Chapters I.-XII., are the essentials of prose composition. But there are certain practical features which require special treatment.



CHAPTER XIII.

PREPARING A COMPOSITION.

120. THE term Composition may be applied to any piece of writing, whether long or short, whether complicated or simple. Thus any one of the independent paragraphs quoted in Chapter III. is no less a composition than Carlyle's *Frederick the Great*, a work in several volumes, each volume divided into books, chapters, sections, and paragraphs.

In the present chapter, however, the term Composition is employed in the usual high-school and college sense, to denote a piece of writing which may vary in length from 600 words to 1500 or 2000 words, and which is to embody the knowledge, views, and feelings of a young writer upon a subject within the range of school and college life or study.

Whether the writing be actually called a composition, or an essay, does not matter. Neither does it matter, for

the present chapter, whether the subject be chosen by the writer or assigned to him by the teacher.

Assuming that the scholar has got his subject and has thought it over in a general way, how shall we direct him to write out his thoughts in a composition?

FORMULATING THE SUBJECT.

121. The first direction is this:

Formulate your subject in a complete and clearly-worded sentence, before you begin to write.

Every subject is elastic: not only may it be treated briefly or at length, but it may also be treated under one or another of numerous aspects. The writer, then, before writing, should first determine the particular aspect. *E. g.*, the subject in general may be:

Camping in the Adirondacks.

The writer is supposed to have passed some weeks in the region.

1. He may narrate the more striking incidents of his trip, from the time he entered the region until he left it.

2. He may give in detail the incidents of a single day in the woods, as a sample of his tent-life in general.

3. He may describe the prominent features of lakes and rivers, woods and mountains.

4. He may mention the peculiarities of fishing or of hunting in the Adirondacks.

5. He may discuss the gain to body and mind from such a trip. Or, the social features of such close companionship.

From the above, and other similar aspects which may suggest themselves, the writer should select that one which suits him best, as the one upon which to concentrate his thinking powers, and should formulate it in a sentence. Thus:

In this composition I am going to describe the lakes, woods, etc. in the Adirondacks.

A sentence of this sort, written down, will be the writer's guide throughout his work, will be his working formula. He need not insert it in his composition ; still less need he take it for the title. But the sentence, the *formula*, he should have constantly before his eye and his mind.

In a composition of more than usual length, say of 2500 or 3000 words, the writer might combine all, or most, of the above-mentioned aspects. He should, in that case, draw up his formula more carefully, somewhat in this fashion :

I am going to narrate a three weeks' trip in the Adirondacks, telling where I went, describing some of the scenery, giving in detail the incidents of one day as a sample of the life, and stating facts enough to justify the conclusion that the trip has done me good.

Here the description would be subordinate to the narrative, and the two together would lead up to the conclusion.

Instead of narration or description, the subject may be in exposition ; *e. g.* :

The University Extension Movement.

Here the writer may treat :

1. The impulse to the movement, and its history : when and where it started, who started it ; what methods were first employed ; what changes introduced in methods and subjects.

2. Difference between England and the United States ; advantages of England.

3. Actual operation of the movement in the city in which the writer resides.

4. Character of the persons engaged in giving and receiving instruction.

5. Possible effect of the movement upon high schools and colleges.

In a long composition these several aspects might be combined. Thus :

I shall mention what gave rise to the movement, the persons who began it, their methods, the changes introduced, the spread of the movement to America, and the present outlook here.

It is quite possible that the above formulation might not suit any one writer. It is not offered here as a model, but only as a suggestion. Nevertheless *some such formula* should be clearly present to the writer before he begins to write.

WORKING PLAN.

122. The directions for a working plan are these :

1. Having formulated your subject, think out the details or items, jotting down each one on a separate slip of paper. This jotting down need not always be in the form of a complete sentence ; usually a catch-word will be enough ; *e. g.*, for a composition upon the Adirondacks :

Difficult crossing — stream ; heavy rains.

Thick moss on trees at —.

Mysterious noises in woods after sunset.

Curious outline of — mountain.

Big catch of trout, Saturday.

M. [the guide] making coffee and roasting potatoes.

For a composition upon University Extension :

Heard — lecture on ancient Greek life ; lantern slides, buildings and costumes.

How many miles must — travel to deliver his lectures ; easier in England ?

Difference between hearing — lecture on Virgil, and reading Virgil in school.

2. Having thus jotted down recollections and ideas, read over the slips and sort them into groups, putting into one group those slips which naturally go together. *Each group will constitute a paragraph*, the separate jottings being the items of the paragraph ; see § 7, 3. Then *formulate the sub-*

stance of each paragraph into a sentence, like the formula for the whole composition, § 121.

3. After all the paragraphs are formulated, prepare a *Working Plan*, by writing at the top of a sheet of paper the formula of the whole composition, and below, in succession, the formula of each paragraph, in the order which—after careful reflection—seems best.

Remember that in Narration and Description the formula of a paragraph is not necessarily the Topic-Sentence. Not even in Exposition is it always such a sentence. But in Exposition it would at least suggest one. (See §§ 11, 12.)

This process of formulating the subject, then jotting down numerous items, grouping these into paragraphs, formulating each paragraph, and lastly drawing up a working plan, is necessarily slow. Certainly the first attempt will cost time and effort. But with every fresh composition the task will become lighter, until—after the fourth or fifth composition—the young writer perceives that he is acquiring a certain skill in formulating and outlining.

But, whether slow or rapid, the process is the only sure means of curing the chronic fault of school and college composition, the lack of unity, order, coherence, and proportion. Every teacher of English knows that the ordinary composition, even if correct in grammar and diction, is rambling. The writer does not start off promptly, he is diffuse where he ought to be concise, or meagre where he ought to amplify, he omits necessary statements, and ends with a limp. All these evils can be traced back to one source: the writer has undertaken to compose without a plan. The cure, therefore, will consist in training him to form a plan. One feature, especially, of good writing can be brought out with the aid of a good working plan, namely, Proportion. The writer, we may assume, is about to describe the lakes, rivers, woods, and mountains of the Adirondacks, in a composition of 600 words. Shall he treat

all four parts of the subject alike, giving to each 150 words? Or may he, by grouping together the lakes and rivers, reduce the number of parts to three, and give to each 200 words? Or may he introduce another variation, by giving 150 words to the mountains and 250 to the woods? Such questions can be answered only by the writer himself, and his answer will depend upon the range of his personal knowledge and the bent of his personal tastes. But, in any case, it is his duty to raise the questions and to answer them. And he should answer them arithmetically :

Given so many hundred words for a whole composition in four, six, eight, nine paragraphs, how many words shall I apportion to each separate paragraph, according to my estimate of its relative importance?

THE FIRST DRAUGHT.

123. Having prepared his working plan, the scholar is now to fill out his first draught. Here the following suggestions may be of service :

1. Use ruled paper, the lines pretty far apart. Also leave an ample margin, perhaps of two or two and a half inches. This will give space for corrections and insertions.

2. Before beginning a paragraph, read over the items which make up its substance. Having these fresh in mind, write out the paragraph rapidly. At least, do not linger over words and phrases, but be satisfied with putting your thoughts in tolerably coherent shape. Your present aim is to compose the paragraph as a whole, rather than to perfect each clause and sentence. It is a safe method to plan deliberately (§ 122); to write rapidly, with *impetus* (§ 123); to review with minute care (§ 124).

REVISION.

124. When the whole composition is rough-draughted, *lay it aside for a day or two, if possible.* An intermission,

if only of a single day, enables the writer to approach the task of revision in the proper mood. While writing is a creative act, implying energy, concentration, warmth, not to say enthusiasm, revision, on the contrary, is *critical*, and calls for coolness and circumspection. The writer is to revise his work in a judicial spirit, approving or rejecting his own words and phrases as impartially as if he were judging the work of another person.

In revising each paragraph, try to employ the Echo, § 8; Connectives, § 9; Repeated Structure, § 10; Topic-Sentence, §§ 11-13. Also try the Paragraph-Echo, § 17.

In revising sentences, scrutinize sharply every *and* and *but*, §§ 90, 91; careless writers use them twice as often as they should. Also scrutinize the Historical Present, § 97. Pay especial attention to Stability of Structure, § 93. Bear in mind that the striking places in the sentence are the beginning and the end, especially the end. Hence the exhortation:

*End with words that deserve distinction.**

In general, guard against redundancy. If the working plan has been carefully prepared, according to § 122, there ought not to be any marked redundancy of matter. But redundancy of expression is a common vice. Old or young, experienced or inexperienced, we are all given to using too many words. Hence the constant duty of learning to condense. But, since condensation cannot be taught by rule, each clause and sentence must be reduced in its own way.

The following device, if employed with caution, may be helpful. In rough-draughting (§ 123), use more words than you are entitled to; *e. g.*, if the number of words allowed for the whole composition is 600, use 800, or perhaps even 900. But use them, of course, with the conscious effort to avoid redundancy, *i. e.*, try to say with

* Wendell, *English Composition*, p. 103.

them as much as possible. Then, in revising, you will know that there are 200 words, or 300, which must be eliminated. This will be a definite object.

In revising, scrutinize every adjective and adverb, to make sure that it truly adds something to the expression. Also weigh every two terms coupled by *and*, to see if one or the other may not be rejected. The word *very* is usually superfluous. Especially acquire the art of weeding out phrases and clauses (see § 94). *E. g. :*

As we look into Salem House we see the system of schooling *which was in use during the days* when Dickens was a boy. We see *as we look in at the door* the principal, holding a recitation, etc.

This can be condensed, and also improved in structure :

As we look [Looking] in at the door of Salem House, we see the system of schooling in use [vogue] when Dickens was a boy. We see the principal holding a recitation, etc.

His appearance had that wholesome plainness *about it* which at once dispelled suspicion.

This would be better as :

His appearance was of that wholesome plainness which at once dispelled [dispels] suspicion.

Refusing all money *consideration*, they [Portia and Nerissa] would only accept the rings.

Why *consideration*? And *only* should stand after *accept*.

Certain it is that he [Ichabod] *mounted his steed with an air of despondency* and rode out *through the gateway crestfallen and dejected*.

This is great unkindness to Irving. The writer would have done better with a simpler expression :

Certain it is that he rode away crestfallen.

He was so *worked up and excited* that, etc.

A man of *mean and* low principles.

Her position was by no means *of an enviable character*.

As we were on our way here we saw a man who was drunk [a drunken man].

If you look from the tower you will see the whole city.

The reason why Socrates was condemned to death *was* because of his unpopularity.

INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION.

125. It is not easy to lay down precise rules for the employment of paragraphs of Introduction and Conclusion.

Are they always necessary? The ordinary text-book of rhetoric seems to teach that they are. Thus:

Every theme, when complete, consists of three parts—the Introduction, the Discussion, and the Conclusion.*

Another term for the Discussion is the Body of the discourse.

There are grave objections to the doctrine as thus put. The whole theory of Introduction and Conclusion, in fact, is applicable to the preparing of orations, public discourses, essays, books, and other matter for print, rather than to the writing of school and college compositions. (See §§ 20, 21, 206.)

In a paper of 600 or 800 or even of 1000 words there is little or no room for a formal beginning and ending. The scholar will do better to content himself with his working plan, first draught, and revision, securing thereby the advantages of simplicity and directness.

If the paper is to contain 1500 words or upward, especially if it is to treat of a subject at all complicated, involving something more than mere narration or description, the writer should consider whether he can make his treatment really more effective by means of an introduction and a conclusion. In other words, the writer should judge for himself, and not follow blindly a mere text-book rule.

In any case the Introduction should be nothing more than the Subject-formula (§ 121), cast into a brief paragraph of forty or fifty words. *E. g.*, Irving introduces his description of Christmas in England thus:

* Williams, *Composition and Rhetoric*, p. 271; see also D. J. Hill, *Elements of Rhetoric and Composition*, p. 16. On the other hand, see the caustic remarks of Wendell, *English Composition*, p. 167, upon the impulse "to preface something in particular by at least a paragraph of nothing in particular, bearing to the real matter in hand a relation not more inherently intimate than that of the tuning of violins to a symphony."

In the preceding paper I have made some general observations on the Christmas festivities of England, and am tempted to illustrate them by some anecdotes of a Christmas passed in the country; in perusing which I would most courteously invite my reader to lay aside the austerity of wisdom, and to put on that genuine holiday spirit which is tolerant of folly and anxious only for amusement.—IRVING: *The Stage-Coach*.

The Conclusion should be a summing-up and application. Thus Irving ends his Christmas descriptions with two paragraphs. In the first he answers the supposed objection:

“To what purpose is all this; how is the world to be made wiser by this talk?”

with the assertion that his object is not to instruct, but to please. This goes back directly to the paragraph of introduction, quoted above. Then comes the final paragraph:

What, after all, is the mite of wisdom that I could throw into the mass of knowledge; or how am I sure that my sagest deductions may be safe guides for the opinions of others? But in writing to amuse, if I fail, the only evil is my own disappointment. If, however, I can, by any lucky chance, in these days of evil, rub out one wrinkle from the brow of care, or beguile the heavy heart of one moment of sorrow; if I can now and then penetrate through the gathering film of misanthropy, prompt a benevolent view of human nature, and make my reader more in good-humor with his fellow-beings and himself, surely, surely I shall not then have written entirely in vain.—IRVING: *The Christmas Dinner*.

From Irving, as a representative author not too far above the reach of the ordinary student, one lesson at least can be learned, namely, to make introductions and conclusions direct, specific, *to the point*. But, since the young writer is too apt to turn them into a mere exhibition of glittering generalities and commonplace, we are perfectly justified in saying to him: If you cannot make them as they should be, *omit them altogether*.

126. Link-Paragraph.—The nature of this is discussed and illustrated in § 18. In a short composition there is

scarcely room for one. But in a composition of some length, *e. g.*, one that seems to require an introduction and a conclusion, such a paragraph may be a desirable feature. By means of it the writer can sum up the details of description or of narration before passing to a different part of the subject. It is especially useful in exposition and in argument, as a means of summing up phenomena pointing to a common cause, or causes operating toward a common result. In addition to the quotations in § 18, the following deserves careful study. In it Burke sums up the six causes or *sources* of the peculiar spirit of liberty in America, sketching briefly that spirit in its outward manifestations. The first sentence of the succeeding paragraph is also given here, to exhibit Burke's manner of passing to a fresh aspect of his subject:

Then, sir, from these six capital sources: of Descent; of Form of Government; of Religion in the Northern Provinces; of Manners in the Southern; of Education; of the Remoteness of Situation from the First Mover of Government; from all these causes a fierce Spirit of Liberty has grown up. It has grown with the growth of the people in your Colonies, and increased with the increase of their wealth; a Spirit that, unhappily meeting with an exercise of Power in England, which, however lawful, is not reconcileable to any ideas of Liberty, much less with theirs, has kindled this flame that is ready to consume us.

I do not mean to commend either the Spirit in this excess, or the moral causes which produce it, etc.—BURKE: *Conciliation*, p. 184.

THE TITLE.

127. The most prolific source of error among young writers is the confusion of Subject (see § 121) and Title. The Subject is the main thing, and the Title is, in strictness, only an after-thought, a label or name, convenient for distinguishing one composition from another.

Frequently, perhaps usually, the title is not even a complete sentence, but only a phrase, a word or two, a proper name. This is exemplified in the following list of titles, taken from about forty high-school compositions submitted

in competition for the same prize: *Woman's Work*, *Municipal Government*, *The White City*, *Our Birds*, *Forestry*, *Our Debt to Holland*. Many of the compositions betrayed the writer's inability to distinguish between subject and title.¹ He, or she, *had written upon the title*, instead of first formulating the subject. Hence lack of purpose, coherence, and force. The papers upon *The White City*, as might have been expected, were the most incoherent. Everything connected in any way with the great Chicago exhibition was apparently regarded as legitimate. Yet one writer, at least, drew the line between description and exposition. Evidently he had formulated his purpose: I will first *describe* those objects which impressed me most, and then I will state *what I learned* from them about our country's present and prospective greatness. His composition, accordingly, was methodical. The only serious defect in its structure was the absence of link-paragraphs, a feature peculiarly desirable in writing upon a subject which is without organic unity.

The following directions can be safely commended to all writers, young or old:

1. Complete your composition according to the method taught in §§ 121-126.

2. When it is completed, prefix — as Title — a short phrase *suggestive* of the real subject.

E. g., in the list cited above, the composition entitled *Our Birds* might have been named, more suggestively, *Habits of the Undomesticated Birds of New York*; the one upon *Forestry* might have been named *The Need of the Study of Forestry in America*.

In general, the scholar should not try to follow the lead of poets, novelists, and other imaginative writers in their choice or invention of titles. *Sights and Insights* may do¹ for Mrs. Whitney's volume of travels; *Aftermath*, for a volume of Longfellow's poems; *Sartor Resartus*, for Carlyle's memorable essay; *Præterita*, for Ruskin's autobiog-

raphy. But such titles are too fanciful for the young. The prime duty of youth is to learn to be direct and explicit. Fancy, if genuine, will find its expression soon enough in after-life.

CHAPTER XIV.

PUNCTUATION.

PUNCTUATION is the art of using certain signs with a view to making the grammatical or rhetorical construction more obvious to the eye. Under Punctuation is here included the use of Capitals and Italics; also Word-Breaking.

The more usual signs of punctuation proper may be classified in two groups. In the first group are the Notes of Interrogation and Exclamation, the Period, Colon, Semicolon, and Comma. In the second, the Dash, Parenthesis, Bracket, and Marks of Quotation.

INTERROGATION—EXCLAMATION.

128. The sign of **Interrogation** is to be placed at the end of every *direct* question; *e. g.*:

Why do you neglect your duty?

Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?—*1 Cor. ix. 7.*

Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar?—*Hamlet, v. 1, 179.*

Note, in the last quotation, the sign of interrogation placed after the relative clause, "that were . . . on a roar."

After an *indirect* question the sign of interrogation is not used, but the ordinary sign of punctuation. *E. g.*:

He demands to know why you neglect your duty.

Hamlet asks where poor Yorick's gibes are now, his gambols, songs, flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar.

The sign of **Exclamation** is placed after a strong ejaculation or clearly-marked vocative case. *E. g. :*

Alas, poor Yorick!

How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!—*Ps. lxxxiv. 1*

Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion!—*Ps. liii. 6.*

The use of the (!) is much less subject to rule than the use of the (?). The King James Bible translation is not consistent in its use of (!). *E. g. :*

Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me: Lord, be thou my helper.—*Ps. xxx. 10.*

It may be doubted, in fact, whether any two books agree, or any one book is perfectly self-consistent. Thus, compare:

If you do not fall in with this motion, then secure something to fight for, consistent in theory and valuable in practice. If you must employ your strength, employ it to uphold you in some honourable right, or some profitable wrong.—*BURKE: American Taxation, p. 152.*

with the same thought, more passionately expressed:

Do you mean to tax America, and to draw a profitable revenue from thence? If you do, speak out; name, fix, ascertain this revenue; settle its quantity; define its objects; provide for its collection; and then fight when you have something to fight for. If you murder—rob! if you kill—take possession! and do not appear in the character of madmen, as well as assassins, violent, vindictive, bloody, and tyrannical, without an object. But may better counsels guide you!—*BURKE: American Taxation, p. 154.*

The punctuation would have been more consistent thus:

If you do, speak out! Name, fix . . . and then fight when you have something to fight for!

The best advice that one can give to the young is to be *very sparing in the use of the sign of exclamation*. Use the sign only when you are fully conscious that your feeling is intense, or that you are directly addressing some person or some personified object. A composition dotted over with (!) is evidence of mental hysteria; to correct such

writing is, for the sober-minded teacher, a personal grievance.

A vocative form, if not strongly felt, or if inserted in the body of the sentence, is usually marked off with commas (see § 133). *E. g.* :

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light;
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.—*In Mem.*, cvi.

The principle of distinction between O and Oh is that O precedes the vocative, whereas Oh precedes a strong general wish. Compare *O Lord of hosts* with *Oh that the salvation*, etc., quoted above. The distinction, however, is less observed in America than in England, and even in England is not observed rigorously.

PERIOD—COLON—SEMICOLON.

129. The **Period** is used to mark the end of a *completed* sentence that is not an interrogation or a strict exclamation. Thus :

A soft answer turneth away wrath : but grievous words stir up anger.
—*Prov.* xv. 1.

By *completed* sentence is meant one that is rhetorically, and not merely grammatically, complete. The above proverb illustrates the distinction. *A soft answer turneth away wrath* is grammatically complete ; but it does not fully express the fundamental thought, namely, the contrast between gentleness and petulance.

The period is also used to mark the abbreviated form of a word ; *e. g.*, Mr., Mrs., p. (for page), pp. (pages), LL.D. (Legum Doctor), D.D. (Doctor of Divinity), W. or Wm. (William), etc. Names of States are frequently abbreviated, *e. g.*, N. Y., Pa., Mass., Mo., etc.

But *nicknames* are not treated as abbreviations. Thus, Ned, Will, Tom, etc. ; Cantab, Oxon (to designate students

of Cambridge and Oxford), Japs ; consols (for consolidated loan of the British government).

Colon ; Semicolon.—These signs mark the larger sections of a complete sentence that is not simple in its structure.

The distinction between period and colon and between colon and semicolon cannot be formulated precisely. It is best learned from examples. Thus, in the proverb quoted above :

A soft answer turneth away wrath : but grievous words stir up anger.
the **Colon** marks the balancing of the first clause by the second. In the following passage :

The Greeks may be said to be the most artistic nation in the world, in the sense that art covered so large a proportion of their whole personality : it is not surprising to find that they projected their sense of art into morals.—MOULTON : *Shakespeare*, p. 44.

the clause introduced by the colon is a corollary of the preceding clause. It would have been better, however, to connect the two more closely by means of *then* : "it is not surprising, *then*, to find," etc.

¹ The colon is now frequently used to introduce a direct quotation, or a statement (of some length) in apposition or in definition. *E. g.* :

Salarino adds : "I would it might prove the end of his losses."—MOULTON : *Shakespeare*, p. 78.

Here the colon-clause is a direct quotation. In the following :

The title of the present study is a paradox : that Shakespeare makes a plot more complex in order to make it more simple.—MOULTON : *Shakespeare*, p. 74.

the colon-clause defines the paradox.

In the following :

Rhetoric is based upon the following sciences : Logic, which deals with the laws of thought ; Grammar, which presents the facts and rules of correct language ; and *Æsthetics*, which investigates the principles of beauty.—SCOTT AND DENNEY : *Paragraph- Writing*, p. 245.

the colon-clause is an appositive enumeration of these "sciences."

For the use of the comma in introducing a quotation, see § 133.

The Semicolon introduces the several independent members of a compound sentence, when these members resemble each other in structure, but differ in thought, and cannot be sufficiently marked by commas. *E. g. :*

His [Boswell's] fame is great ; and it will, we have no doubt, be lasting ; but it is fame of a peculiar kind, and indeed marvellously resembles infamy.—MACAULAY: *Boswell's Johnson*.

History was, in his [Johnson's] opinion, to use the fine expression of Lord Plunkett, an old almanac ; historians could, as he conceived, claim no higher dignity than that of almanac-makers ; and his favourite historians were those who, like Lord Hailes, aspired to no higher dignity.—MACAULAY: *Boswell's Johnson*.

The semicolon is especially used for marking the members of a series of statements, when these members are independent clauses and not mere phrases. *E. g. :*

Philosophers assert that nature is unlimited in her operations ; that she has inexhaustible treasures in reserve ; that knowledge will always be progressive.

It will be observed that in Macaulay's long description of Burke (§ 5) the several items mentioned in illustration of Burke's knowledge (sections 1 and 2), although stated in mere phrases and not in independent clauses, are marked by semicolons. This is in consequence of the unusual length and monotonous structure of the description ; commas here would not have distinguished the items sufficiently. But in the following Macaulay's punctuation is normal :

These things were in themselves an education, an education eminently fitted, not, indeed, to form exact or profound thinkers, but to give quickness to the perceptions, delicacy to the taste, fluency to the expression, and politeness to the manners.—MACAULAY: *Boswell's Johnson*.

Here semicolons after *perceptions, taste, expression*, would be improper.

The semicolon is gradually supplanting the colon for marking balanced clauses. In the proverb:

A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

the most modern punctuation would prefer a semicolon after *wrath*.

COMMA.

The use of the Comma is—to all writers—somewhat of a puzzle. This perplexity is the result of two causes:

1. The lack of perfectly uniform rules or usage in certain cases.

2. A growing disposition to disuse the comma in cases where it was formerly used. Books printed fifty years ago have more commas to the page than books printed to-day.

The following directions will meet all the important cases that arise in ordinary writing.

130. Ellipsis (Omission), Series.—The omission of any part of speech necessary to the full grammatical construction is indicated by a comma. *E. g.*:

Homer was the greater genius; Virgil, the better artist.

Here the comma takes the place of the omitted *was*.

Aristotle, Hamilton, and Mill are authorities in logic.

Here the comma before *Hamilton* marks the omission of *and*. It will be observed that the comma is also used after *Hamilton*, although the *and* is not omitted. This is the custom in punctuating a series of terms, phrases, or clauses. It is not strictly logical, but perhaps it may be regarded as a device to prevent the reader from coupling the last two terms in one, as if (1) Aristotle, (2) Hamilton and Mill, joint authors of one particular book or system of logic.

If, in the above sentence, the *and* is used throughout, the punctuation is:

Aristotle and Hamilton and Mill are authorities in logic.

If the *and* is omitted altogether, the punctuation is:

Aristotle, Hamilton, Mill, are authorities in logic.

Here the introduction of a comma after *Mill* is not logical: it breaks the direct grammatical connection of subject and verb. But the usage is uniform.

In such sentences as:

Virtue, religion is the one thing needful.

no comma is put after *religion*. The two terms do not constitute a series, but are essentially one term, as the singular *is* indicates. The case is really one of Apposition (§ 131).

Where words or phrases occur in pairs, each pair is marked off with commas. *E. g.:*

I take thee to my wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance.

In the above it is to be observed that in the clauses *for better for worse, for richer for poorer*, there is an omission of *and* or *or*. This omission would ordinarily require a comma. But the introduction of one here would mar the general symmetry of the punctuation. The sequence of thought in the whole sentence is so close (all the clauses after *wife* express one thought, namely, the manner in which the husband is to have and to hold his wife) that semicolons are not possible. The following is more normal:

The poor and the rich, the weak and the strong, the young and the old, have one common Father.

131. Co-ordination; Apposition.—In § 85 attention is called to the distinction between the restrictive and the co-ordinative uses of the relative pronoun. In the present section the principle is laid down and illustrated that *all co-ordinative clauses, whether pronominal or adverbial, are marked off by commas, while restrictive clauses are not. E. g.:*

John, *who* happened to be in the garden at the time, saw the carriage drive up.

John was in the garden, *where* he had been since breakfast, when the carriage drove up.

At this critical juncture, *when* England was threatened by a coalition of European powers, Hastings was fortunately at the head of affairs in India.

The above are co-ordinative. The following are restrictive, and therefore do not take commas :

We have not time to enumerate all the other men of weight *who* were attached to the government.

This monument marks the spot *where* General —— fell.

The time was approaching *when* our island was to be assailed.

The difference between co-ordination and restriction is one of principle, and demands close thinking. The scholar will apprehend the difference by bearing in mind that a co-ordinative clause merely *repeats without modification the thought expressed in the antecedent*. *E. g. :*

In practical life, *where* we have to act, the formation of judgments is a necessity. In art we can escape the obligation.—MOULTON: *Shakespeare*, p. 7.

Where merely repeats *practical life*, as will appear if we formulate the expression in a syllogism (§ 75):

1. In order to act we must form judgments.
2. We have to act in *practical life*.
3. Therefore in *practical life* we must form judgments.

Observe the difference between the above and the following sentence:

Venice is a city *where* the people can do without horses and carriages.

Where does not merely repeat *city*; on the contrary, it modifies and defines Venice to be one particular city, and is not applicable to every city. If the *where* were really a mere repetition, we should have the syllogism:

In a *city* people do without horses and carriages.

Venice is a *city*.

Therefore the people of Venice do without horses and carriages.

The fallacy is self-evident.

It will be of practical help to remember that the relative pronoun after a proper name or other personal designation is always co-ordinative, for the reason that personal designation marks the individual and does not admit of real definition or restriction (see §§ 49, 51). *E. g.:*

John, *who* happened to be in the garden at the time, saw the carriage drive up.

In this particular narrative there is only one John.

The arrest was pronounced unlawful by the Court of Common Pleas, in *which* Chief Justice Pratt presided, and the prisoner was discharged.
—MACAULAY: *Chatham* (second essay).

There is only one Court of Common Pleas in England.

Joanna, *whose* poverty suggested to her simplicity that it might be the costliness of suitable robes which caused the demur, asked them if they fancied God, *who* clothed the flowers of the valleys, unable to find raiment for his servants.—DE QUINCEY (*Joan of Arc*), v. 405.

There is only one Joan of Arc; there is only one God.

Where, however, a proper name is not used as a genuine proper name, but—by Synecdoche, § 110—is merely representative of a class, there the following clause is restrictive and is without comma. *E. g.:*

Oh for some Hampden who might teach us to resist oppression.

In Gray's *Elegy*:

Some village Hampden, *that*, with dauntless breast,
The little tyrant of his fields withstood.

the comma before *that* is eighteenth-century punctuation rather than nineteenth. Hampden stands for those who resist oppression.

Apposition is merely a variety of co-ordination. *E. g.:*

The chief work of Chaucer, the *Canterbury Tales*, suggested to Longfellow the plan of the *Tales of a Wayside Inn*.

The greatest of poets among the ancients, Homer, like the greatest among the moderns, Milton, was blind.

John Chapman, Doctor of Medicine. John Chapman, M. D.

In certain short phrases the comma is omitted, the apposition being scarcely felt as such. *E. g. :*

Paul the apostle was a man of energy.

Spenser the poet lived in the times of Queen Elizabeth.

The brothers Wesley.

On the other hand, we punctuate with a comma :

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God.

Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, was a man of energy.

Spenser, the author of the *Faery Queen*, died in 1599.

Sidney's *Arcadia* was written for the entertainment of his sister, the Countess of Pembroke.

132. Intermediate, Detached, Transposed Expressions.—Without attempting to define the class, or to state all its varieties, we may indicate the general principle by means of examples.

Certain words and phrases, not modifying any particular word, but qualifying the sentence as a whole, are followed by a comma when they begin the sentence. When they stand in the body of the sentence they are preceded and followed by a comma. The following is a list of such phrases most in use :

in short,	in truth,	as it happens,
in brief,	in fact,	as it were,
in fine,	in reality,	after all,
in a word,	no doubt,	you know,
to be brief,	to be sure,	of course.

The single words most in use are :

then,	however,	too,
therefore,	namely,	perhaps,
consequently,	indeed,	finally.
accordingly,	moreover,	

But it is to be borne in mind that many of the above phrases and words admit of two constructions, *i. e.*, they

may modify the sentence as a whole, or they may qualify only a part of the sentence or only a single word. In the latter case they are not marked by commas. Observe the difference in each pair of sentences in the following list:

On this statement, *then*, you may rely.

I believed you *then*; now I do not.

I thought, *too*, that you were discontented.

I thought that you were *too* discontented.

He promised, *however*, to reform.

However much he promised, he did little.

Mournful, *in truth*, is it to behold what the business called "History," in these so enlightened and illuminated times, continues to be.—CARLYLE: *Boswell's Johnson*.

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and *in truth*.—JOHN iv. 24.

Certain other words, standing detached at the beginning of the sentence and modifying it as a whole, are marked by commas. *E. g.*:

Well, do as you think best.

Why, you are quite mistaken in this.

Yes, your conjecture is right.—*No*, you are in error.

Again, let us consider the consequences of this conduct. (Here *again* means *in the next place*, and does not denote repetition.)

With the above contrast the following:

Woe unto you when all men speak *well* of you.

Why do you mistake my meaning?

Again he fell to the ground (*i. e.*, a second time).

The following clauses are transposed and intermediate:

His father, they say, is an eminent lawyer.

Be diligent, I beseech you, in the pursuit of knowledge.

In the usual order of words these would read, without punctuation:

They say that his father is an eminent lawyer.

I beseech you to be diligent in the pursuit of knowledge.

Many expressions are marked by commas, either because they are abridgments of some fuller form (see § 131) or

because, without commas, the sense might not be perfectly obvious. *E. g.:*

Some men are refined, *like gold*, in the furnace of affliction.

Man, *in his higher moods*, aspires to God.

In Dante, *for the first time in an uninspired bard*, the dawn of a spiritual day breaks upon us.

A contract, *to be valid*, must be for some lawful object.

133. Vocative and Absolute Expressions; Quotations.

—Vocative expressions, in the body of the sentence, are preceded by a comma. They are also followed by a comma, if the exclamation-point is not used (see § 128).

E. g.:

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky.

Hail, O king!

An Absolute clause is marked off by commas. *E. g.:*

Shame lost, all virtue is lost.

Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst.

A state of ease is, generally speaking, more attainable than a state of pleasure.

A Quotation of inconsiderable length is frequently introduced by a comma, instead of a colon (see § 129).

E. g.:

Macaulay has observed, "Minds differ as rivers differ."

134. Condition, Concession, and Correlation.—Clauses expressing a condition or a concession, or introducing a correlation of some length, are marked by commas. *E. g.:*

If you would succeed in business, be honest and industrious.

The tree will not bear fruit in autumn, *unless* it blossoms in the spring.

However base or unworthy, every passion is eloquent.

Whatever be his faults, he is still a promising scholar.

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.

Sometimes the terms of condition are omitted. *E. g.:*

Classical studies, *regarded merely as a means of culture*, are deserving of careful attention.

This is equivalent to, *if they are regarded*, etc.

Brief expressions of dependence and correlation do not need a comma. *E. g.:*

You may go *when* you please.

He is almost *as* tall *as* his father.

A clause beginning with the conjunction *that*, or with the *to*-infinitive, is not usually introduced by a comma. *E. g.:*

He went abroad *that* he might have better opportunities of study.

I find *that* Darwin's *Origin of Species* is an interesting but difficult book.

He went abroad *to* study.

But the comma is used when the *that*-clause or the *to*-infinitive is separated from the antecedent expression on which it depends. *E. g.:*

He *visited* all the provinces of the empire, *that* he might see for himself the condition of the people.

In order that, *in order to*, are still usually introduced by a comma. *E. g.:*

He went abroad, *in order that* he might recover his health.

There is a disposition, however, to punctuate *in order that* and *in order to* like the simple *that* and the simple *to*-infinitive. *E. g.:*

Shakespeare makes a plot more complex *in order to* make it more simple.—MOULTON: *Shakespeare*, p. 74.

That is, the comma is used only when the dependence is seriously interrupted. *E. g.:*

Shylock's conduct was intelligible only on the supposition *that* he was keeping up to the last moment the appearance of insisting on his strange terms, *in order that* before the eyes of the whole city he might exhibit his enemy at his mercy, etc.—MOULTON: *Shakespeare*, p. 65.

DASH.

135. The proper use of the Dash is to mark a change or an interruption (and transposition) of the sentence-structure. *E. g.:*

Was there ever a bolder captain of a more valiant band? Was there ever—but I scorn to boast.

The four greatest names in English poetry are among the first we come to—Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton.

In the first of the above the structure is entirely changed; is, in fact, left incomplete. In the second it is interrupted and transposed; *Chaucer*, etc. would normally follow *poetry*.

The Dash is also used to mark a rhetorical summing-up, either with or without contrast. *E. g. :*

He was witty, learned, industrious, plausible,—everything but honest.

You have given the command to a person of illustrious birth, of ancient family, of many virtues, but—of no experience.

The great men of Rome, her beautiful legends, her history, the height to which she rose, the depth to which she fell,—these make up one half of our student's ideal world.

Sometimes the Dash is used to detach a clause and give it *rhetorical prominence*. *E. g. :*

To Anderson—a young man of vivid fancy—everything in Italy was a delight.

When we look up to the first rank of genius—to Socrates and Plato, to Bacon and Leibnitz and Newton—we find they are men who bow before the infinite sanctities which their souls discern.

All these uses of the Dash are sanctioned by the common practice of writers and printers. But there is a further use, to which the sober-minded object, as liable to dangerous abuse; namely, the dash as a universal sign of humor, wit, sarcasm, of every feeling, in short, which is not quite strong enough to require the sign of exclamation. In the hands of certain writers, notably Dickens and Carlyle, the dash thus becomes a *sign of elocution* (see § 138). *E. g. :*

He had no malice in his mind—
No ruffles on his shirt.

The good woman was allowed by everybody, except her husband, to be a sweet-tempered lady—when not in liquor.

My part in them has much matter for regret—for deep regret, and deep contrition, you well know.—DICKENS.

Whom I so respect and honour—whom I so devotedly love.—DICKENS.

A perennial thing, this same popular delusion; and will—alter the character of the language.—CARLYLE.

Mankind sail their life-voyage in huge fleets, following some single whale-fishing or herring-fishing commodore; keep no reckoning, only keep in sight of the flagship—and fish.—CARLYLE.

What may be tolerated in Dickens or Carlyle, soon becomes, in writers of less experience, intolerable. The teacher should do his utmost to check the abuse, by calling upon his scholars to account for every dash employed. If they are unable to give some cogent reason, he should require them to change the punctuation. Too much strictness in this direction is safer than too little.

A purely technical use of the dash is to mark the omission of a word, part of a word, figures, etc. *E. g. :*

We reached the town of —, where we found a good inn.

The town of D— is not far off.

Matt. ix. 1-6 (*i. e.*, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6).

PARENTHESIS—BRACKET.

136. Sometimes the Parenthesis is called the Round Bracket; then the Bracket proper is called the Square Bracket.

The **Parenthesis** is used to enclose words or clauses which, although they are an expression of the writer's thought, do not form a part of the grammatical structure of the sentence *E. g. :*

The Egyptian style of architecture (see Dr. Pocock's work) was apparently the mother of the Greek.

The writer gives us to understand that his opinion is based upon Pocock's work. He might have thrown the reference into a foot-note.

Pride, in some disguise or other (often a secret to the proud man himself), is the most ordinary spring of human action.

At the present day the disposition is to restrict the parenthesis to cases like the above, in which the parenthetical thought is obviously detached from the grammatical structure of the main sentence. But formerly the parenthesis was used for clauses which are now marked by commas or by dashes. *E. g. :*

The wonders of this man's life exceed all that (he thinks) is to be found extant.—DE FOE: *Robinson Crusoe* (Preface).

If, sir, we incline to the side of conciliation, we are not at all embarrassed (unless we please to make ourselves so) by any incongruous mixture of coercion and restraint.—BURKE: *Conciliation*, p. 162.

But all who read (and most do read) endeavour to obtain some smattering in that science.—BURKE: *Conciliation*, p. 182.

The **Bracket** (Square Bracket) marks the insertion of matter which is not the expression of the writer himself, but is supplied by some one else, critic or editor. *E. g. :*

I am now as well as when you was [were] here.

This means that the original writer wrote *was*, which the person editing or quoting would correct to *were*.*

In printing texts which are imperfect or illegible in the original, the editor may insert in brackets words or letters which, in his opinion, stood, or should have stood, in the original. Such bracketed insertions are called conjectural restorations or emendations. *E. g. :*

And all his lands and goods [be] confiscate.—*3 Henry VI*, iv. 6, 55.

The [be] is a conjectural restoration made by Malone.

The practice of newspapers is to use the parenthesis for matter not in the text. *E. g. :*

My lords, I am amazed at his lordship's declaration (hear, hear).

The (hear, hear) are not uttered by the speaker, but by his hearers.

After the lucid explanation by the last speaker (Mr. Brown), I feel that I can add very little.

* *You was* occurs frequently in eighteenth-century English authors, where *you* refers to an antecedent in the singular.

Here (Mr. Brown) is inserted by the reporter to inform the reader who is meant by *speaker*.

In such cases the bracket would be more consistent. It has been used in the present book. See [the lieutenant-governor], Hawthorne, § 8.

QUOTATION.

137. There are two ways of quoting a statement made by another person: the direct, and the indirect.

In **Direct Quotation** we give, not only the thought, but the very words. And we enclose the words in “ ”. *E. g.:*

Burke, in his speech on Conciliation with America, p. 177, said: “First, sir, permit me to observe that the use of force alone is but *temporary*. It may subdue for a moment; but it does not remove the necessity of subduing: and a nation is not governed, which is perpetually to be conquered.”

A quotation within a quotation is enclosed in ‘ ’. *E. g.:*

Burke, in his speech on Conciliation, p. 212, said: “This competence in the Colony Assemblies is certain. It is proved by the whole tenour of their Acts of Supply, in which the constant style of granting is ‘an aid to his Majesty;’ and Acts granting to the Crown have regularly for near a century passed the public offices without dispute.”

The phrase *an aid to his Majesty* is quoted by Burke from the acts in question.

Occasionally a quotation, if it be short and from a well-known text, is not marked with “ ”, but italicized. *E. g.:*

This point is the *great Serbonian bog, Betwixt Damietta and Mount Casius old, Where armies whole have sunk*. I do not intend to be overwhelmed in that bog, though in such respectable company.—BURKE: *Conciliation*, p. 196.

Burke is quoting from *Paradise Lost*, ii. 592, and not with perfect accuracy. Milton’s text reads: *that Serbonian bog*.

If a direct quotation is given in an independent paragraph, printed in different type, it is usually not enclosed in “ ”. Thus, in the present book, the illustrative extracts

are without these signs. A quotation within the extract is enclosed in “ ”. *E. g.* :

“Would you examine me as a witness against myself?” was the question by which many times she defied their arts.—DE QUINCEY (*Joan of Arc*), v. 404.

In quoting directly we should reproduce the exact phraseology, spelling, and punctuation of the original.* Corrections or additions we may either enclose in brackets (§ 136) or append in foot-notes.

Indirect Quotation consists in reproducing the thought of another person in the wording of the writer. *E. g.* :

Socrates said that he believed the soul to be immortal.

Such quotation is given without “ ”. A direct quotation would be :

Socrates said : “I believe that the soul is immortal.”

Indirect quotation demands great care on the part of the person quoting. It is, in fact, a kind of translation, in which the new words, as in translating from a foreign language, may suggest *a different shade of meaning*. Thus some one may have said :

I [William] slept last night from ten to seven o'clock.

This might be quoted indirectly, with sufficient accuracy :

William said that he slept nine hours last night.

But it would not be accurate in this form :

William said that he had a long *and refreshing* night's rest.

The nine hours may have been refreshing, or they may not. To say that they were is to add something not in the original.

Accuracy in quoting indirectly cannot be taught by rule.

* In a few of the extracts in the present book slight changes have been made. *E. g.*, in § 8 words have been italicized for the purpose of marking the Echo. So, also, in §§ 9 and 10 the Connectives and Topic Sentences have been italicized. And De Foe's spelling, except in § 139, has been modernized. The quotations from Shakespeare are in the spelling and punctuation of the Clarendon Press editions, wherever these editions are available.

It requires a clear perception of the original, together with earnestness of purpose and a good command of language. Every answer to an examination-question is, in substance, an indirect quotation: the scholar reproduces, in his own wording, his understanding of the original. The answers, as all teachers know, reveal every grade of error, from a total misunderstanding of the original to a mere blunder in the choice or order of words.

Only one suggestion can be given for preparing a composition. If you doubt in the least your ability to quote indirectly, quote directly.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

138. 1. *Do not confound Punctuation with Elocution.* This error, which has already been touched upon in § 135, works injuriously in two opposite directions: the writer is tempted to think that emphatic expressions must be punctuated; conversely, that punctuated expressions must be emphatic. But, in reality, punctuation is—in the main—logical; whereas elocution is emotional. The two principles are better kept apart. When the king says:

My words fly up, my thoughts remain below.—*Hamlet*, iii. 3, 97.

words and *thoughts* are for the elocutionist fully as prominent as the comma after *up*. In the phrases: "Yes, sir," "No, sir," we disregard the comma and pronounce: Yessir, Nosir. In the sentence:

The great use of books is to rouse us to thought.

we mark the emphasis as if the line were divided thus:

The great use of books | is | to rouse us | to thought.

Whoever will follow, printed text in hand, the delivery of a familiar Shakespearean passage by an accomplished actor, will learn once for all the difference between delivery and punctuation.

2. *Acquire facility in the use of the period, semicolon, and comma;* they constitute, with the interrogation-point, the

indispensable routine. The following blunders are chronic:

a. The writer uses a comma where the sense demands a period.

b. He puts down a comma whenever he pauses to collect his thoughts or hesitates for a word.

c. He uses a comma at the beginning of co-ordinative and intermediate expressions (§§ 131, 132), but forgets to put it at the end also.

d. He seems to be totally ignorant of the use of the semicolon.

e. *She* (for this blunder is more noticeable among girls and women) uses the dash as a universal sign for comma, semicolon, period, or to express hesitation or emphasis (see § 135).

The following passage, reproduced from an examination-paper in English, exhibits most of the masculine blunders:

After the Queen had eaten some of the poisoned food she immediately became sick and fell into a stupor. Catherine Seyton, who had also eaten some became sick, but she had not eaten enough to harm her, and immediately alarmed the household, They summoned, an old lady Magdalen Graeme who had sold Dryfesdale an almost harmless poison which would only produce sleep and weakness [!].

The above demonstrates that weakness of expression is the outcome of weak thinking.

The following passages show the feminine *dash*:

Suddenly, some one among the Persians shouted loudly "Rustum!" Sohrab—, surprised, startled, was so moved with emotion that he could not defend himself—

Then the sound of a galloping horse smote his listening ear—nearer and nearer it came—faster and faster fell the blows on Ichabod's horse—then with a lunge away he started. Up the hill—down again—nearer and nearer to that fatal bridge flew Ichabod and his pursuer. . . . With one last cry he flung himself from his horse, and was never seen in that part of the country any more—it was supposed that the headless horseman spirited him away.

CAPITAL LETTERS—ITALICS.

139. Capitals.—The first letter of a word should be a capital, if the word is :

1. The first word after a period, or the first in a paragraph, chapter, or line of poetry.

Also, the word immediately after an exclamation or interrogation should begin with a capital, if the sense of the exclamation or interrogation is grammatically complete.
E. g. :

Was there no help in their extremity? It seemed strange that there should be none, with a city round about her.

But in a long-continued question, made up of many phrases or clauses following *exactly the same form of interrogation*, the intermediate parts do not begin with capitals. Compare the questions in *Hamlet* and in *1 Cor.* ix. (§ 128) with the following, in which the form is varied :

What is civilization? Where is it? What does it consist in? How is it defined? By what sign is it known?

2. The name or title of God, *e. g.*, Jehovah, Creator, etc.

3. The name of a person, place, country, etc., *e. g.*, Shakespeare, London, England.

4. The pronoun I and the interjection O.

5. The technical designation of a prominent historical event or political party or measure, *e. g.* : the Civil War, Republican, Democrat, Populist, the Revolution, the Silver Bill.

6. The first word of a direct quotation. *E. g. :*

Plutarch says, "Lying is the vice of slaves."

But this rule is not strictly observed in very recent books. *E. g. :*

Dr. Johnson . . . is confident enough to prophesy : "poetry may subsist without rhyme, but English poetry will not often please."—MOULTON : *Shakespeare*, p. 14.

7. A title of office or of honor, *e. g.* : President Cleve-

land, Queen Victoria, the Prince of Wales, Lord and Lady Byron, the Mayor of New York, General Sherman, etc.

8. Clauses separately numbered, even though they form parts of a continuous sentence. *E. g.:*

The writer asserts, 1. That Nature is unlimited in her operations; 2. That she has inexhaustible treasures in reserve.

Without numbering, the above would be punctuated:

The writer asserts: first, that Nature is unlimited in her operations; second, that she has, etc.

9. Titles of printed works or chapters of works. Sometimes they are also given in italics (see § 140). *E. g.:*

The plot of *As You Like It* is wound up in a quadruple marriage.

Have you read *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*?

One of Charles Reade's brightest stories is *Love Me Little, Love Me Long*.

How far have you got in *Sartor Resartus*? I have just read the chapter entitled *The Everlasting No*.

10. In expository writing (see Ch. VII.) a term when first introduced or defined is frequently spelled with a capital. *E. g.:*

A Pronoun is a word used instead of a noun.

See also § 6 of the present book:

Some authorities upon the paragraph have mentioned additional features—viz.: Selection, Proportion, Variety.

This expository use of capitals is not *obligatory*; it is merely a practical convenience. If not moderate, it becomes tiresome.

Occasionally a strongly-marked personification is capitalized. *E. g.:*

And Freedom shrieked as Kosciuszko fell.

In general, the young writer should restrict his use of capitals to cases 1-9 above, mastering them thoroughly.

The use of capitals, small caps, and the like, in printing title-pages, chapter-headings, etc., pertains to book-making rather than to composition proper, and is too technical for the present work.

Among modern writers Carlyle makes himself offensive by his extravagant use of capitals. In certain passages in some of his latest writings almost every prominent noun is thus marked. This is contrary to modern policy, which reserves the sign of distinction for words of distinction. Carlyle's capitals are, in fact, a reversion to the practice of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and early eighteenth centuries. Thus:

Thus doing, your name shall florish in the Printers shops. Thus doing, you shall be of kin to many a Poeticall Preface. Thus doing, you shalbe most faire, most rich, most wise, most all: you shal dwell vpon Superlatiues.—SIDNEY: *Defence of Poesy*, ed. 1595.

All the infections that the Sunne suckes vp
From Bogs, Fens, Flats, on *Prosper* fall, etc.

Tempest, ii. 2, 1, folio of 1623.

And though a Linguist should pride himself to have all the Tongues that *Babel* cleft the world into, yet, if he have not studied the solid things in them as well as the Words & Lexicons, he were nothing so much to be esteemed a learned man, as any Yeoman or Tradesman competently wise in his Mother Dialect only.—MILTON: *Tractate on Education*, ed. 1673.

When this Wall was finished, and the Out-side double fenc'd with a Turff-Wall rais'd up close to it, I perswaded my self, that if any People were to come on Shore there, they would not perceive any Thing like a Habitation.—DE FOE: *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 89.

If you do not, you Man or you Nation, love the Truth enough, but try to make a chapman-bargain with Truth, instead of giving yourself wholly soul and body and life to her, Truth will not live with you, Truth will depart from you; and only Logic, 'Wit' (for example, 'London Wit'), Sophistry, Virtù, the Æsthetic Arts, and perhaps (for a short while) Book-keeping by Double Entry will abide with you.—CARLYLE: *Frederick the Great*, Book iii., ch. viii.

ITALICS.

140. Italics are marked in writing by underscoring the word or words. Their use is not governed by precise rules; but there are three general cases:

1. To mark a foreign term still felt to be foreign. *E. g.:*

But, in other respects, he was a man *comme il faut*. However his mornings might be spent, his *soirées* were elegant, etc.—DE QUINCEY (*Dr. Samuel Parr*), v. 28.

2. To quote the title of one composition in the body of another, or to quote a brief passage in a foreign language, sometimes in the English language. *E. g.:*

In the *Merchant of Venice* our interest is at the beginning fixed upon Antonio, etc.—MOULTON: *Shakespeare*, p. 67.

"*De mortuis nil nisi bonum*" :—This famous canon of charity ("Concerning the dead let us have nothing but what is kind and favourable") has furnished an inevitable occasion for much doubtful casuistry.—DE QUINCEY (*Dr. Samuel Parr*), v. 11, note.

3. To mark words which are emphatic or prominent. *E. g.:*

Such a suggestion moreover makes the whole play [Julius Cæsar] one complete *wave* of popular fickleness from crest to crest.—MOULTON: *Shakespeare*, p. 189.

The use of italics in case No. 1 is now almost regular, though some writers prefer, for Latin at least, quotation-marks, *e. g.*, "*modus operandi*."

In case No. 2 some writers use both italics and quotation-marks; other writers use neither device; others, again, use one or the other. *E. g.:*

We may justly regard "*Paradise Lost*" as one of the noblest monuments of human genius.

We may justly regard *Paradise Lost* as, etc.

We may justly regard "*Paradise Lost*" as, etc.

We may justly regard *Paradise Lost* as, etc.

The last form seems to be the one most favored at present.

* As to case No. 3, the young are urgently advised to be very sparing in the use of italics. It is much better to underscore not at all than to underscore too much. Underscoring, like the dash (§ 135), is employed to excess by women, especially in letter-writing. *E. g.:*

"My dear Major Pendennis," the letter ran, "I beg and implore you to come to me *immediately*"—very likely, thought Pendennis, and

Steyne's dinner to-day—"I am in the greatest grief and perplexity. My dearest boy, who has been hitherto everything the fondest mother could wish, is grieving me *dreadfully*," etc.—THACKERAY: *Pendennis*, ch. i.

WORD-BREAKING.

141. As here used, the term does not include the numerous technical rules according to which a word is apportioned between the end of one line and the beginning of the next in a printed page. Those rules concern the printer only, and not the writer as writer.

When the writer, on approaching the end of a manuscript line, sees that there is not space enough for the whole of the next word, without crowding, what shall he do?

1. He may leave the remaining space blank, beginning the word on the next line.

2. Or he may break, *i. e.*, divide the word between the two lines.

Instead of trying to tell the young writer exactly when and how he may break, it is far safer to tell him when *not* to break. Hence a general warning:

If you are in the slightest uncertainty, do not break, but begin the word on the next line.

The following are special warnings:

1. Never break a monosyllable.

2. Do not break short dissyllables, such words as *any, able, upon, about, master, lion, real, spirit, tyro*.

3. Do not break any word in such a way as to begin the second line with the syllables *-el, -er, -ic, -al, -ing, -ly*, and the like. Perhaps even *-dom* is undesirable.

4. Make your breakings etymological, *i. e.*, in accordance with the composition of the word. Thus, the following breakings are good:

arch-angel,

looking-glass,

trans-port,

resent-ment,

circum-scribe,

false-hood.

The following are bad, at least in writing :

angel-ic,	nation-al,
look-ing,	complete-ly,
port-er,	cruel-ty.

Writing can always be slightly contracted or expanded without attracting attention. The writer, therefore, by adjusting his characters to any given line, can always avoid the problem of breaking. A little closer writing in the middle of the line will enable him to get in such a syllable as *-ic* or *-ty* at the end. A little looser writing will save him from the temptation of ending with *a-* and beginning with *bout*, *round*, or *lone* ; will also spare him the necessity of considering whether *ex-amine* is good.

Even a blank space at the end of the line is decidedly better than an awkward breaking.

CHAPTER XV.

READING AND COMPOSITION.

142. IN the present section a few preliminary questions are discussed.

1. What should be the allowance of time for English in the high school? A generous but not excessive allowance would be one daily exercise for at least three years.* This allowance will not appear excessive, if we consider that the course is to include the appreciative study of certain representative works in prose and poetry, the mastering of a text-book of composition, and a large amount of writing, with careful correction.

The object of the course is to train pupils in the art of writing well. To write well means:

To spell correctly, to discriminate in the use of words, to arrange words in proper grammatical relation, to group sentences in a paragraph organized around a central thought or opinion, to co-ordinate half a dozen or more paragraphs so as to indicate, approximately at least, some evolution of the thinking faculty.†

Evidently, to secure all these ends there must be incessant practice in writing: let us say two paragraphs, each of 150 or 200 words, every week. For the advantages of paragraph-writing, see § 16. But an occasional essay of 600 to 1000 words is indispensable, being the only means of instruction in paragraph-grouping. See Ch. XIII.

2. What is the true function of a text-book of composition—the present book, for instance—in the English course?

* An exercise is here reckoned at forty-five minutes. If a full hour is given, the number of weekly exercises may be reduced to four.

† *The School Review*, January, 1894, p. 38.

First, to enable the student to interpret English literature more intelligently and more systematically than he could otherwise. The so-called rules of rhetoric being nothing more than the formal systematic statement of principles observed, consciously or unconsciously, by good writers, the text-book of composition and the literature studied ought to be mutually helpful. The text-book ought to awaken the student's attention to the features of expression and invention in the literature; on the other hand, the literature ought to corroborate the statements of the text-book.

Second, to furnish the student with a standard by which to test his own writing systematically, to view each process of the art in its relation to the other processes.

The text-book of composition should be *the constant companion of writing, not a substitute for it*. To attempt to dispose of the art of composition in a twelve weeks' term of daily recitations, without written exercises, is merely to waste time. A term-examination upon rules and definitions, *e. g.*, upon the figures of speech, is no test of one's ability to write. Such ability can be demonstrated only by writing several consecutive pages, neatly and correctly expressed, upon a given subject. The text-book, being, like the Latin grammar, merely a practical means to a practical end, should be in constant use until the end is attained, *i. e.*, until the scholar is so familiar with principles, rules, and directions that he applies them unconsciously in his own writing, from sheer force of habit. The lessons should be as short as possible, and the doctrine of each lesson should be applied practically both in reading and in writing. Each topic of the book should be reviewed month by month throughout the course.

143. In what way should writing be taught? The best way, perhaps the only satisfactory way, is to teach it in direct connection with reading.

The object of the following sections of this chapter is to indicate the connection somewhat in detail. In the present section a few general points are discussed in advance.

1. Reading should be an essential feature in high-school training. The high-school course is complained of as being too arid. It is all hard brain-work, gerund-grinding and mathematical formulæ. There is no culture in it, no quickening of the soul. Granted the defect, the remedy lies in the careful appreciative study of good prose and poetry as an embodiment of the general culture of our English-speaking race. Certain books are to be read, not for the opportunity they offer of memorizing names and dates, but for their liberalizing, humanizing influence upon the spirit of the reader. They are to be a source of pleasure.

2. But good reading is not to be merely a source of pleasure. It should combine the useful with the agreeable; it should be the means by which we enlarge our vocabulary and learn to discriminate shades of meaning (see § 80). What is called Denotation and Connotation (§§ 162-165) can be mastered only by means of careful reading.

3. Good reading is also the most general antidote for the malaria of vulgarity and slang to which we are incessantly exposed. In learning to appreciate what is noble and refining in literature, one acquires a dislike of the ignoble and degrading, whether in speech or in conduct. One is initiated into the proprieties of life, conforms—in some slight measure at least—one's own modes of thought and expression to literary ideals. However slight this conformity may be, it is an incalculable gain.

4. Reading yields an inexhaustible supply of subjects for composition. These subjects may be of two general kinds: one, in which the scholar is merely required to state, in a paragraph or two, his recollections of what he has read; the other, in which he is asked to state his own

views upon what he has read. Each kind of writing gives to the reading a definite aim, not in the least incompatible with the scholar's enjoyment of the book read, but still independent of it.

Besides, we are to bear in mind that writing, like other arts, is in its earlier stages an imitative process. The young will write well in proportion as the words and phrases and general treatment which they have studied in some great author become thoroughly familiar to them and are merged insensibly in their own forms of expression. They will learn to see, to feel, to think, they will acquire a sense of action, of power, of proportion, by estimating these gifts and qualities in Irving or in Tennyson, in Macaulay or in Shakespeare.

The following sections are not offered as a programme, as a system which must be followed rigorously. They are merely suggestions of the various ways in which books may be studied with a view to composition. Every teacher can best judge for himself how far he is able to go in any one direction with the means and opportunities at his disposal. But some study and some composition along each of the lines here indicated will be within the capacity of every school, and will, it is confidently believed, prove more helpful than the practice of assigning subjects unconnected with school reading.

EXERCISES IN NARRATION AND DESCRIPTION.

144. It is not always easy to draw the line sharply in ordinary writing between narration and description (see §§ 32, 33), nor is it always advisable to make even the attempt. In the present chapter the vaguer terms *account*, *recount*, *relation*, *relate*, are employed in cases where the distinction is not to be dwelt upon.

To the thoughtful critic it is a matter of surprise that narration and description are so inconspicuous among the subjects for composition proposed in the ordinary school

text-books. By far the larger share of attention is given to subjects in exposition, either alone or in connection with argument. Yet *a priori* one would suppose that narrating and describing were the forms most useful to the young, in training their perceptions, and that the more abstruse and difficult processes of expounding and arguing, except in the simplest forms, might be reserved for maturer years.

In the following sections the subjects have been taken in the main from books read, or likely to be read, in schools which conform to the so-called New England College programme. But the books themselves are accessible to all.

145. Rip Van Winkle.

1. [First twelve paragraphs in Irving.]

In a paragraph of 200 words, describe the good and the bad traits in Rip's character (see § 38), his relations to his wife, to his neighbors.

2. [Following eight paragraphs, from: "In a long ramble," to: "On waking he found himself."]

In a paragraph of 150 or 200 words, recount his adventures with the mountain spirits.

3. [Next four paragraphs, from: "On waking," to: "As he approached the village."]

In a paragraph of 150 words, relate Rip's awaking. Avoid historical present (§ 97).

4. In two paragraphs, 150 words each, relate Rip's return to the village, and the puzzling evidences of change.

5. In two paragraphs, 150 words each, give an account of his recognition; describe his son and his daughter.

146. Sleepy Hollow.

1. In one paragraph, 100 words, describe Ichabod's outward appearance.

2. Describe his character.

3. Give, in 150 words, an account of him in the school-house.

4. Describe, in 200 words, Van Tassel's house and farm.

5. Describe, in 150 words, Ichabod on Gunpowder.

6. In two paragraphs, 150 words each, give an account of the supper at Van Tassel's.

7. In two paragraphs, 150 words each, relate the ride home :

- a. To the point where Ichabod meets the horseman.
- b. The rest.

147. The Angler.

Since Fishing is a favorite subject for school-composition, it may be worth while to examine Irving's treatment of the subject, in the *Sketch-Book*.

1. Number each paragraph in the margin. For convenience the beginning of each paragraph is here given :

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| (1) It is said | (11) He had been |
| (2) One of our | (12) I found that |
| (3) Our first essay | (13) There is certainly |
| (4) How smoothly | (14) I cannot forbear |
| (5) For my part | (15) On parting |
| (6) I recollect | (16) His family |
| (7) But, above all | (17) I found him |
| (8) In a morning's | (18) How comforting |
| (9) I thought that | (19) On inquiring |
| (10) I soon fell | (20) He was a |
| (21) I have done | |

2. Paragraph-Structure.

- (1)-(7) relate Irving's experience in America, with a knot of friends;
- (8)-(21), his subsequent experience in England.
- (5) second half; note the historical present.
- (9) first half; is the account of the veteran's methods dynamic description?
- (9) latter part; would the last three sentences have been better as a separate paragraph?
- (10) show linking effect.
- (14) why is this made a separate paragraph?
- (15) compare Hawthorne, §§ 42, 43; Dickens, § 41.
- (21) how does this go back to (1)?

3. Peculiar words and expressions. Note :

- (1) suspect; verge of summer.
- (2) perplexed; inconveniences.
- (3) velvet margin; lavish unheeded beauties [compare Gray's *Elegy*]; impending banks [compare overhanging banks (9)].
- (4) vagrant brook.
- (5) tortoise [what is the usual name in the U. S.? which is correct?]; plumping in.

- (8) throws itself; might let you [quotation in note].
- (13) brimming along; vagary; transiently.
- (16) brabbling.

The following expressions call for criticism :

(1) "I recollect studying . . . and moreover that we were all," etc.—This violates the principle of unity and stability, § 93. It might be improved: "I recollect that I studied . . . and moreover that we were."

"As soon as the weather was auspicious and that the spring began to melt."—This use of *that*, instead of repeating *as soon as*, is old-fashioned, occurring not infrequently as late as the eighteenth century; see Mätzner, *Englische Grammatik* (2d ed.), iii. 420. In modern syntax we say merely: "and the spring began."

(8) "former storms, but present fair weather."—Compare De Quincey, § 6.

(15) "A hammock was slung from the ceiling, which," etc.—See § 84. How might the construction be improved?

(13) Repunctuate the first sentence, using the dash.

4. Note the (intentional) vagueness of the title (see § 127). *The Angler* may stand for Irving himself, for the Don (2), for the urchin (6), for the veteran (8), or for any devotee of rod and line (21).

Are the titles: *The Wife*; *The Widow and her Son*; *The Stage Coach*; *The Pride of the Village*, equally vague?

5. Compare the American brook (3, 4) with the English (9, 13); compare the latter with the description in Tennyson's *The Brook*.

The Angler is slight in substance; it contains no striking scenes, like those in *Rip*, or *Sleepy Hollow*. But it reveals an equal mastery of the technique of writing, and by reason of its very simplicity and quiet tone it is peculiarly available for minute dissection. The teacher might, with considerable profit, require his pupils to state the subject of each paragraph, to distinguish narrative and description, and to pick out the scattered bits of exposition.

148.

Silas Marner.

1. *Paragraph-Structure*.—In § 7 it is stated that George Eliot is not careful in her paragraphing. The following are instances.

1. In chapter iv. the sale and killing of Wildfire, Dunstan

Cass's walk back to Raveloe, and his entering Marner's cottage are all told in one long paragraph, three pages in length. This should be broken up into at least three paragraphs:

a. From: "Keating rode up now," to: "road in which Wildfire had fallen."

b. From: "Wildfire had fallen," to: "see that it was a handsome whip."

c. From: "handsome whip," to: "that Marner was not there."

Reconstruct the above in three paragraphs of 50, 150, 150 words respectively.

2. In chapter ii. the fourth paragraph, beginning: "But at last," and ending: "in the gathering gloom," introduces the rise of the spirit of avarice in Marner. The next two paragraphs relate his healing of Sally Oates and its effect in intensifying his isolation. The seventh paragraph: "Gradually the guineas, the crowns," resumes the subject of his avarice.

How might the connection between the fourth and the seventh paragraphs have been made more direct and obvious? (See § 18.)

2. *Character-Description*.—The story offers many opportunities in this line. *E. g.*:

1. The character of Marner at Lantern Yard; at Raveloe, before the adoption of Eppie; after the adoption.

2. The moral weakness of Godfrey Cass, chapters iii., ix., xiii., xv. Its punishment, chapters xviii., xix.

3. *Description of natural objects*.

1. Marner's cottage, chapters iv. and xvi.

2. The Cass mansion, chapters iii. and xvii.

4. *Narration*.

1. Mollie's walk and death, ch. xii.

2. Retarding effect of ch. vi.; note the echo ("ghostly," "ghosts") from ch. vi. to ch. vii.

5. *Topic Sentences*.

1. In ch. i. note the beginning of the description of Raveloe: "And Raveloe was a village where many of the old echoes lingered." George Eliot thus gives the character of the village, before going into the details of its outward appearance.

2. In ch. vii., the middle paragraph, beginning: "This strangely novel situation," is a link. Note the sentence: "Our consciousness rarely registers the beginning."

3. In ch. ix., last paragraph, note the sentence: "Favorable Chance, I fancy, is the god."

149. Merchant of Venice.

In writing upon poetry, especially upon poetry of such high order as Shakespeare's or Tennyson's, it is advisable to make one's own prose sober, plain, and explicit, to reproduce the thought of the original, without trying to echo the peculiar style.

1. Describe the character of Antonio, i. 1, 3; ii. 8; iii. 2, 3; iv. 1; v. 1.

2. Of Portia, i. 2; iii. 2; iv. 1; v. 1; note the alternation of sprightliness and seriousness.

3. Relate Bassanio's choice of casket, using the historical present. Is there any connection between his character, or profession in life, and his choice?

4. What justification has Jessica for running away, ii. 3, 5, 6?

5. Narrate the trick with the rings, giving every essential feature, and avoiding the historical present.

Julius Cæsar.

1. Account of the storm, i. 3, introducing Casca, Cicero, and Cassius, and using the historical present.

2. Account of the killing of Cæsar, iii. 1, avoiding historical present.

3. Character of Brutus, i. 2; ii. 1; iii. 1; iii. 2 (speech); iv. 3; v. 5.

4. Character of Portia, ii. 1; ii. 4; iv. 3.

5. In what sense is Casca "a professional politician," knowing the habits and disposition of each one of his associates and utilizing them for his own ends? * The answering of this will necessitate a careful study of all the scenes in which he figures.

Macbeth.

1. Narrate the unbroken series of Macbeth's successes, ending in the murder of Banquo; the unbroken series of failures, beginning with the escape of Fleance. (Moulton, *Shakespeare*, p. 127.)

* See Moulton, *Shakespeare*, p. 182. In writing upon Cassius one student made the extraordinary statement that "Cassius was a professional politician and made a paying business of it"! Evidently he had caught Moulton's epithet in some indirect way and connoted it (see § 163) in the sense of "ward-heeler" or "wire-puller."

2. Account of the interviews with the witches, i. 3; iv. 1. How are the witches' words an ironical deception of Macbeth? Compare v. 8, line 20.

3. Retarding effect of the porter scene, ii. 3. (Compare De Quincey, *On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth*, x. 389.)

4. Compare the storm, ii. 3, 4, with the storm in Julius Cæsar.

150.

The Princess.

The character of the Princess herself is too complex to be treated by any except very apt scholars. But the following or similar subjects are within the range of all.

[The line-numbers refer to Rolfe's edition. Boston; Osgood, 1885.]

1. Recount the story, i. 1-200, using the third person and avoiding the historical present.

2. Character of Psyche, ii. 91; 171-296; v. 68-107; vi. 192-277.

3. Account of the geological excursion, iii. 152-iv. 132.

4. Lady Blanche's speech, iv. 273-339.

5. The Princess's letter, v. 364-428.

6. Character of Prince Arac.

7. Character of Cyril.

151.

Macaulay's Life of Johnson.

[The page-numbers refer to Thurber, *Select Essays of Macaulay*. Boston; Allyn & Bacon, 1892.]

1. Sketch Johnson's personal appearance, pp. 55, 56, 97.

2. His character and habits, pp. 56-59, 63, 69, 73, 79.

3. Sketch of the Johnson Club, p. 83.

4. Johnson's household, pp. 86, 97.

5. Account of the Dictionary, pp. 68, 69, 74, 75, 81.

STUDIES IN PARAGRAPHING.

The advantages of gaining an insight into the mechanism of composition can scarcely be over-estimated. One learns thereby that composition is not haphazard, but methodical. One also un-learns the crude notion that writing goes by inspiration.

Nothing could be more instructive than Macaulay's method in his second essay on the Earl of Chatham. The first half of the essay is here analyzed systematically.

Macaulay's Chatham.

[The text here followed is that of O. A. Lester. New York; Maynard & Co. Figures not enclosed in parentheses designate the text-page; figures enclosed in parentheses designate the paragraph-number. This paragraph-numbering is not in the text, but has been supplied for the present purpose.]

152. *Ratio of Paragraph to Page.*

In this first part, pp. 9-62 (= 53 pp. exactly), there are 80 paragraphs in all, long and short. This ratio of 80 : 53 exemplifies the modern practice of making the average paragraph-length less than the page. That is, the eye rests, on the average, at least once in every page on the typographical break occasioned by paragraphing. Besides, in the text here followed nearly every page of text is shortened by foot-notes. Were these removed, and the pages of full length, the page-breakings would be somewhat more numerous.

153. *Long Paragraphs.*

By a long paragraph is here meant one that exceeds a page (= about 320 words). The longs number nineteen, viz.:

(14) = pp. 17, 18	(49) = pp. 41, 42
(26) = pp. 23, 24	(52) = pp. 43, 44
(29) = pp. 25, 26	(55) = pp. 45-47
(31) = pp. 27, 28	(56) = pp. 47, 48
(33) = pp. 29, 30	(57) = pp. 48, 49
(35) = pp. 31, 32	(58) = pp. 49, 50
(39) = pp. 33, 34	(61) = pp. 51, 52
(40) = pp. 35, 36	(73) = pp. 57, 58
(46) = pp. 38-40	(76) = pp. 59, 60
(78) = pp. 60, 61	

(14), the partition of powers between Pitt and Newcastle, is mentioned, § 19, 1. The longest is (46), relating Pitt's resignation.

Of every one of these long paragraphs (in fact, of every paragraph in the whole essay) it can be confidently asserted that it observes the principles of Unity and Sequence (§§ 3, 5). The subject can be stated in a short sentence, around which the details are grouped effectively. Every student should be required to test this, by formulating two or three of the longer paragraphs. Thus (55):

Party spirit revives and attacks Bute as a royal favorite.

Observe that this is suggested in a topic-sentence, p. 46, line 1109:

"He was a favorite; and favorites have always been odious in this country."

154. *Short Paragraphs.*

The following are distinctively short.

(2) = p. 9	(44) = p. 38
(3) = p. 10	(47) = p. 40
(7) = p. 13	(54) = p. 45
(10) = p. 15	(63) = p. 53
(16) = p. 19	(65) = p. 53
(17) = p. 19	(66) = p. 54
(18) = p. 20	(67) = p. 54
(23) = p. 22	(70) = p. 55
(24) = p. 22	(74) = p. 58
(25) = p. 22	(75) = p. 59
(36) = p. 32	(77) = p. 60
(38) = p. 32	(79) = p. 61
(42) = p. 37	(80) = p. 62

The following are evidently link-paragraphs: (3), (7), (16), (24), (36), (44), (54), (65), (75), (77), (79), (80). Each of them, by a brief retrospective or a brief prospective glance, facilitates the transition from one part of the general subject to the next. Paragraph (5), the Malebolge comparison, is quoted, § 18; it is not distinctively short. Paragraph (80):

"We are inclined to think, on the whole, that the worst administration which has governed England since the Revolution was that of George Grenville. His public acts may be classified under two heads, outrages on the liberty of the people, and outrages on the dignity of the crown."

had it ended with *Grenville*, would have been a mere detached statement, like the quotation from Matthew Arnold, § 2. But the second sentence, summing up in advance Grenville's blunders under two general heads, makes it a genuine link.

The student should be required to explain the linking in several of these short paragraphs.

It is also worth while to notice the alternation of long and short paragraphs. Further, the series of longs: (55), (56), (57), (58), and the three series of shorts: (16), (17), (18); (23), (24), (25); (65), (66), (67).

155. Paragraph-Echo; Topic Sentence.

A few striking instances of *Echo* (§ 17) are here noted:

(2), "We left Pitt."

(24), "Thus there was absolutely no opposition," echoes "not one of the malcontents durst lift."

(40), p. 42, "Such were the views of the Duke of Bedford."

(50), "The session drew towards the close."

(54), "Some of these objects."

(64), p. 53, "That succor."

(69), p. 55, "In this step."

(73), "This vaunting was premature."

The opening of (68), p. 54, is interesting. The preceding paragraph, relating the system of wholesale bribery employed by Fox, ends with the sentence:

"The lowest bribe . . . was . . . for two hundred pounds."

(68) opens:

"Intimidation was joined with corruption."

Had Macaulay written:

With [this] corruption was joined intimidation.

he would have echoed more plainly. But his purpose, doubtless, was to make the intimidation as prominent as possible.

Topic Sentences are equally conspicuous. Only a few are here noted:

(4), p. 10, "Each . . . the representative of a great principle."

"Both were thrown into unnatural situations."

(5), p. 11, "Each creature was transfigured into the likeness of its antagonist."

"Each [party] gradually took the shape and color of its foe."

(10), p. 15, "To frantic zeal succeeded sullen indifference."

(26), p. 24, "Thus, during many years, the Kings of England were objects of strong personal aversion."

(27), p. 24, "He [George II.] was not our countryman."

(29), p. 26, "He [George III.] was emphatically a King, the anointed of heaven."

156. De Quincey's Revolt of the Tartars.

De Quincey's method is in marked contrast with that of Macaulay.

[The text here followed is that in Masson's Edinburgh edition, 1890, vii. pp. 368-421.]

1. *Ratio of Paragraph to Page.*—In the 54 pages there are only 46 paragraphs. The De Quincey page containing about twenty-five per cent. more matter than the Macaulay page, it is evident that Macaulay paragraphs twice as frequently.

2. *Short Paragraphs.*—There are only 5, namely, at pp. 379, 386, 390, 404, 408. Not one of them is very short; the shortest, at p. 404, contains 74 words.

3. *Long Paragraphs.*—Some are excessively long. The two longest are: pp. 406–408; pp. 414–416; each contains about 1000 words. The paragraph at pp. 376–378 is almost as long; several other paragraphs measure two pages, or very nearly.

4. *Unity and Sequence.*—These principles are observed in De Quincey's paragraphs, despite their length. The very long paragraph, pp. 406–408, is centred around Weseloff, his rescue of the khan, and his escape to Russia. Pp. 414–416 relate the terrible fighting around and in the lake of Tengis.

There is no serious digression anywhere.

5. *Paragraph-Echo; Topic Sentence.*

Echo is not frequent. We may note:

p. 369, "This triple character."

p. 379, "With this magnificent array."

p. 379, "These splendid achievements."

p. 386, "Among these last."

Topic Sentences, as might be expected, are not conspicuous in such long paragraphs. But at least one may be pointed out here. It is the conclusion of the narrative proper, the carnage at the lake of Tengis, p. 410:

"The spectacle became too atrocious; it was that of a host of lunatics pursued by a host of fiends."

6. *Comparison of De Quincey and Macaulay.*—The comparison is necessarily unfavorable to De Quincey; his paragraph-structure must be pronounced unwieldy. Each of his very long paragraphs might easily have been broken up into two or three, greatly to the reader's comfort. The student should be required to restate one or another of these long passages in a group of short paragraphs of his own. In doing this he is to bear in mind that the paragraph-unit is not a fixed, mathematical unit, but something elastic, something which may be condensed, or expanded, or modified, in his reasonable discretion.*

* See Scott and Denney, *Paragraph-Writing*, pp. 93-106.

An apt illustration is Macaulay's presentation of the several Whig connections and their respective shares in the Pitt-Newcastle administration. Macaulay might have put the entire subject into one long paragraph (which, after all, would not have been as long as many in De Quincey), of which the distribution of offices among the Whigs would have been the central thought. But he has followed the opposite and much more practical method of giving to each connection a paragraph of its own. Thus (17) treats of the Newcastle connection; (18) is a very short link; (19) treats of the Grenvilles; (20), the Bedfords; (21), Murray and Fox; (22), the remaining Whigs.

Few readers will hesitate to give the preference to Macaulay's method of building up a group of *short co-ordinate* paragraphs.

[A word of caution may not be out of place. De Quincey's narrative is not to be accepted as sober history; it is highly colored and even distorted. His distances, 2000 miles from the Wolga to the Torgai, 2000 more from the Torgai to Lake Tengis, are impossible; they should be reduced one-half. The river Jaik is now called the Ural. The final resting-place of the fugitives was on the upper Ily, near the Chinese military post of Kuldja. Tengis must be for Tengheez, another name of Lake Balkash. But it is not a fresh-water lake (p. 413); and the carnage there is enormously exaggerated. The dramatic appearance of the Chinese emperor on the scene must be pure fiction.

See Schuyler, *Turkestan*, ii. 172; also, "Across Asia on a Bicycle," *Century Magazine*, August, 1894.]

EXERCISES IN EXPOSITION AND ARGUMENT.

Exposition and Argument are usually so intimately associated, not to say intermingled, in actual discussion that no attempt is made in the present chapter to keep them separate.

Excellent opportunities of studying these forms are offered in Burke's speech on *Conciliation with the Colonies* and Webster's first oration on *The Bunker Hill Monument*.

157. Burke's Conciliation.

Burke's speech is a model in its exposition of general facts and principles, in close reasoning, in practical sense, in the force and purity of its expression, and, above all, in its skill in "winding into the subject like a serpent." It should be studied with minute

care. Three months would not be an excessive allowance of time. The following topics merely suggest the proper method of study.

[The text here followed is that of E. J. Payne's *Select Works of Burke*, 2d ed. Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1892, i. 161-234.]

1. *Subjects for Composition.*

1. Burke's statement of the object of his speech, pp. 165, 166.
2. His exposition of the material resources of the colonies, in population, commerce, agriculture, fisheries, pp. 168-176.
3. Objections to the use of force, pp. 177, 178.
4. Exposition of the character and temper of the colonists, pp. 178-184. The summing-up paragraph is quoted, § 126.
5. Three, and only three, ways of dealing with the colonies. Objections to the first two. Pp. 187-195.
6. Plea for deciding the whole controversy in the spirit of practical expediency, rather than as a matter of strict legal right, pp. 195-197.
7. Fundamental propositions, by the adoption of which the present dispute will be disposed of, pp. 209-216.

Several of the above topics might be expanded into an essay of two or three paragraphs. The student might also be required to show wherein Burke's statements were confirmed by subsequent events.

2. *Paragraph-Length.*—In the structure and grouping of his paragraphs Burke is fully equal to Macaulay, perhaps even superior.

This speech contains 141 paragraphs in 72 pages, each page containing about 340 words. There are only 14 paragraphs which can be called long, *i. e.*, measuring a full page or upward, *viz.*: pp. 172-174; 175, 176; 178-180; 180, 181; 182, 183; 184-186; 196, 197; 201-203; 211, 212; 215, 216; 221-223; 226, 227; 229, 230; 231, 232. Not one is conspicuously long.

On the other hand, short paragraphs are numerous. Many are extremely short, summing up, linking, or otherwise marking some quick transition of thought. The nervous strength and directness of some of these short paragraphs may be compared with the sustained dignity of the longer ones.

Especially noteworthy is the single-sentence paragraph, p. 189:

"Adhering, Sir, as I do, to this policy, as well as for the reasons I have just given, I think this new principle of hedging-in population to be neither prudent nor practicable."

It is almost epigrammatic in its condemnation of the "hedging-in" land-policy. It does not violate the principle laid down in § 2, for it is a genuine link, marking the transition to the next subject, namely, the attempt to arrest colonial commerce.

3. *Echo; Topic Sentence.*—Herein also Burke is admirable. Only a few striking examples need be pointed out.

Note the ending of the first paragraph:

“We are therefore called upon, as it were by a superior warning voice, again to attend to America; to attend to the whole of it together; and to review the subject with an unusual degree of care and calmness.”

This announces the general theme. Note the echo in the first sentence of the following paragraph:

“Surely it is an awful subject; or there is none so on this side of the grave.”

Because it is such an awful subject, the orator has conscientiously tried to master it. This is the substance of the paragraph, ending with the pointed remark:

“I really did not think it safe, or manly, to have fresh principles to seek upon every fresh mail which should arrive from America.”

Not only does the remark characterize the orator's own conscientious method, it is also a covert thrust (see § 165) at the lack of method in many of those whom he is addressing.

A striking instance of repeating the topic sentence (see § 13, p. 25) occurs in the long paragraph, pp. 221–223. Near the beginning of the paragraph, at the top of p. 222, we read:

“It is besides a very great mistake to imagine that mankind follow up practically any speculative principle, either of government or of freedom, as far as it will go in argument and logical illation.”

Compare this with p. 223:

“Man acts from adequate motives relative to his interest; and not on metaphysical speculations.”

158. Webster's Bunker Hill.

Webster's oration is easier, in most respects, than Burke's speech. It is much shorter; it is in the line of exposition and exhortation, rather than of argument. It presupposes no more knowledge than ought to be possessed by every American, and its general principles are few and readily grasped. Every student should be required to make an outline of the whole, reducing the substance of each successive paragraph to a sentence.

[The text here followed is that of A. J. George, *Select Speeches of Daniel Webster*, Boston; Heath, 1893.]

1. *Paragraph-Length*.—There are 44 paragraphs in 25 pages. The long paragraphs are only three: pp. 123, 124; 126, 127; 129–131.

2. *Unity and Sequence* in the paragraph are carefully observed.

3. *Paragraph-Echo* is less evident than in Macaulay and Burke.

4. *Topic Sentences* are easily recognizable. Thus the concluding paragraph answers the question: What is the present duty of Americans? The answer is double: first, to build upon the foundation of independence already laid; second, to cultivate the spirit of union. These thoughts are expressed in the topic sentences, p. 145:

“Our proper business is improvement. Let our age be the age of improvement.”

and, just before the close:

“Let our object be, OUR COUNTRY, OUR WHOLE COUNTRY, AND NOTHING BUT OUR COUNTRY.”

5. *Link-Paragraphs*.—Many of the short paragraphs are noticeable for their linking effect.

E. g., the first half of p. 125 sums up the material changes in America since 1775; the remainder of the page, a separate paragraph, touches upon the material changes in Europe; the first paragraph of p. 126 refers to the spiritual progress of both continents. Then comes the link, in which the orator recalls his hearers to the actual scene before them, and reminds them of the circumstance that they have now, in their very midst, survivors of the battle itself. This leads on to the well-known apostrophe in the next paragraph: “Venerable Men!”

Equally noticeable is the paragraph near the bottom of p. 133. After having stated, in two paragraphs, the impressions created throughout the world by the news of the battle of Bunker Hill, the orator introduces the link:

“Information of these events, circulating throughout the world, at length reached the ears of one who now hears me. He has not forgotten the emotion which the fame of Bunker Hill, and the name of Warren, excited in his youthful breast.”

This leads on to the apostrophe to Lafayette, in the next paragraph:

“Sir, we are assembled to commemorate,” etc.

The change here from the third person, *he, his*, to the second person is little less daring than the like change in the apostrophe to Warren, quoted in § 114.

Which passage in the oration is the best, would be an idle ques-

tion. But certainly the paragraph pp. 123, 124 is unsurpassed for its skilful blending of exposition and feeling. The orator confronts the question: What is, after all, the real object, the real good, of the monument? He answers, that the erection of such a monument is at once a high privilege and a sacred duty. The topic sentence, top of p. 124:

"We rear a memorial of our conviction of that unmeasured benefit which has been conferred on our own land, and of the happy influences which have been produced, by the same events, on the general interests of mankind."

expresses the ruling *thought* of the paragraph. But this is immediately followed by the sentence:

"We come, as Americans, to mark a spot which must forever be dear to us and our posterity."

as the concomitant expression of the ruling *sentiment*.

MISCELLANEOUS SCHOOL-COMPOSITION.

In many schools the scholars are required to write descriptions of objects in the vicinity, narratives of their own invention, and letters. The practice is excellent. It trains the perceptive faculties and gives a touch of reality to the study.

Yet, in view of the general truth that the earlier stages in the art of writing must always be largely imitative, we may question the propriety of treating these exercises as wholly original, *i. e.*, without regard to models.

159. In **Description** the scholar is required to examine for himself some public building, *e. g.*, a large factory, an opera-house, a shop exhibiting a considerable variety of goods, or some remarkable object in the landscape, and to describe what he has seen.

But certainly before beginning to compose, probably even before beginning to examine, the scholar should be required to read carefully the description of a similar object by some writer of acknowledged ability. He will be stimulated thereby; he will also acquire a serviceable vocabulary and train his powers of observation.

The highly idealized descriptions in the great poets are not available for such a purpose. But the writings of travelers and of novelists of the better class abound in concise and graphic descriptions that are not above the range of young scholars. Irving, Hawthorne, Dickens, and George Eliot will supply models of description for almost every situation in ordinary human experience.

The imitation here proposed is not to be slavish or mechanical. The scholar is not to compose with his Irving or his Dickens or his George Eliot or his Hawthorne before him, to copy off their phrases and reproduce their turns. He is merely to put himself under the influence of his models, to learn from them how to observe. On this point there can be only one rule: Having used and profited by your models, *put them aside before beginning to compose.*

160. In **Narration** the scholar is required to recount some incident in his own experience, or some (unpublished) story. Here, as in description, it is advisable to first study the methods of skilful narrators. Irving and Dickens are safe models. So also is Hawthorne, when not moralizing, or describing at too great length. At any rate, the thread of narrative in Hawthorne is easily regained. But George Eliot as a simple narrator is open to criticism. Not only are her expository moralizings (see § 48) too numerous and too long, but she frequently neglects to make the thread of the narrative perfectly obvious (see § 27). Scott would be a good substitute. In his prose descriptions he is apt to be heavy. But his intense personal vitality seldom fails to make itself felt in narrative passages.

161. Letters.—The term letter has a wide range, from a postal card with a few words on the back, up to a long and formal disquisition upon the gravest problems, *e. g.*, Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (nearly 300 pages of print, in the form of a letter to a young friend in Paris). But for school purposes we need consider only

two kinds: Letters of Business and Letters of Friendship.

In letters of all kinds the address (on the envelope) should be explicit and formal: explicit, in stating all that is needed for ready transmission through the mails; formal, in giving only the exact title of the person, firm, or corporation addressed. To put upon an envelope, which may be read by servants, letter-carriers, post-office clerks, and other persons, anything in the nature of a nickname, personal allusion, or the like is a gross breach of etiquette. An address cannot be too formal. Neither can it be too legible. The recipient of a letter may puzzle out its contents, especially if he is familiar with the handwriting. But the writer has no excuse for wasting the time of hard-driven post-office clerks.

A few specimen addresses are given in the Supplement.

The address of a postal card does not differ from that of a closed envelope. For the back of the card, which is equally exposed to view, the rule is: Write nothing but facts. If possible, state things in such a way as to leave them unintelligible to all but the person addressed. Refrain scrupulously from all expressions of relationship, friendship, or other personal matters. Express no opinions. If possible, sign with initials rather than with the full name, or—still better—omit the signature altogether.

Letters of Business.—Among these are here included notes of invitation, acceptances, and regrets.

The characteristics of a business letter are brevity, extreme clearness, and the observance of certain forms. A few specimens are given in the Supplement.

A business letter may demand great care in the composition, *e. g.*, if the money interests involved are large, or if the business itself is complicated, or if the personal relations are peculiar. In all such cases it is well to prepare a working plan, of the kind set forth in § 122. *E. g.*, let us imagine the writer to be an applicant for a certain po-

sition. After formally addressing the person, or firm, he may mention how he happened to hear of the vacancy. Then, in a succession of short paragraphs, perhaps numbered, he may state his various qualifications for the position and introduce his references. Finally, in a concluding paragraph, he may give his general assurances of interest and good will. A letter thus drawn up catches the eye of the reader, and predisposes him in favor of the writer, apart from the merits of the application itself.

Letters of Friendship.—These comprise every variety of subject: news, details of every-day life, expressions of opinion and feeling. The contents may be narrative or descriptive in form, or expository, or even argumentative and persuasive. The only general principle of unity in letter-writing, as in the personal essay (§ 61), is found in the individuality of the writer. It is this stamp of individuality which makes the letters of certain persons interesting.

Most letters are short and unimportant, and without any unity of subject. Yet even the shortest and most unimportant letter can be orderly. Although the writer need not prepare an elaborate working plan, as if for a formal composition, he should, before writing, jot down very briefly the headings of the subjects that he thinks of mentioning. If his letter is in answer to another, he should re-read this and note the questions raised in it. Having all his headings thus jotted down, he can group them in his mind, and treat them in the order which seems most natural.

Each subject may be treated in a separate paragraph. As a rule, no paragraph in an ordinary letter should be longer than half a page, or perhaps two-thirds of a page. The usual fault in private letters is that they run through page after page in utter confusion of subject and without the slightest pause. The reader is expected to pass from the weather to cooks, or want of cooks, to whooping-cough,

the latest dancing party, Miss ——'s engagement, the ball-game, mamma's headaches, and the newest fashion in hats, all in an unbroken series of sentences where half the commas should be periods and all the dashes should be commas.

To make one's private letters too systematic and studied is to run the risk of appearing pedantic. But this extreme is easily avoided. All that is demanded of the letter-writer is a little order, some care in putting together things that belong together, in other words, some congruity.

Prudence cannot be impressed too strongly upon all letter-writers. *Avoid extreme expressions of opinion or of feeling.* Many a remark which might pass unnoticed in conversation becomes glaring in written form. *Do not take too much for granted in the reader.* A remark, inoffensive if uttered in a pleasant tone and accompanied by a smile, may read harsh at a distance, in black and white; even between the most intimate friends a certain amount of reserve is needful. *Do not commit yourself on paper.* Letters sometimes fall into the wrong hands and may be cited against you. All these warnings may be summed up in one: *Write down nothing that you are not prepared to stand by at all times and in every situation.*

It is to be regretted that there is no collection of letters adapted to school use. The *Four Centuries of English Letters*, edited by W. B. Scoones (American reprint by Harper & Bros.), is good in its way, but is too bulky and involves too much study of literary history. What is needed is a small collection, not over 200 pages, containing a careful selection of the brightest and easiest letters of such authors as Dickens, Hawthorne, Macaulay, De Quincey, Thackeray, Scott, George Eliot, Irving, etc. With the aid of such a collection the student could compare the familiar epistolary style of each author with his formal style.

DENOTATION AND CONNOTATION.*

162. Nothing in the general process of composition is more dependent upon habits of careful reading than the gift of denoting and connoting properly. What is meant by these terms? To answer the question adequately we must first consider the relation of human speech to the human mind.

Language, spoken or written, is at best only an imperfect means of communication. Comparatively few words state exactly the thought or feeling of the writer, and comparatively few are capable of awakening the identically same thought or feeling in the mind of the reader. When the word does convey exactly the writer's mental state, we say that it *denotes* perfectly, or that its *denotation* is perfect.

For the purposes of a simple text-book like the present we may group words, with regard to their capacity of denotation, in three general classes: 1. Proper names; 2. Terms of science; 3. Words of every-day life, words used in ordinary conversation or in books written for the general public, the terms of literature, in short.

Proper names, whether applied to persons, to lower animals, or even to inanimate objects, are perfect in denotation, *e. g.*, Julius Cæsar, William Shakespeare, George Washington, the racing-horse Eclipse, the steamship *Campania*.

The terms of science also denote, or should denote, perfectly. It is the chief duty of science, in fact, to secure perfect denotation; and a science is exact in proportion to the denotative precision of its terms. Thus mathematics and mathematical physics are exact sciences. Chemistry

* The best treatment of this subject is in Wendell, *English Composition*, especially pp. 68-74; 90; 148; 241, 242; 271; 285. But Prof. Wendell goes too far in treating connotation as fundamentally an element of force. After all, connotation is only a new and perhaps more convenient term for *suggestion*. In suggesting we usually economize effort; and economy is of course a gain of power. But sometimes we may suggest *too much*, and that is just the opposite of force.

is perhaps a trifle less exact in its terminology. Biology, still less; the terms "animal," "plant," "cell," "microbe," etc. are less rigorous than "sine," "tangent," "gravitation." But of scientific terminology in general we say that its proper function is denotation.

The terms of literature, our ordinary nouns, adjectives, and verbs, are seldom strictly denotative. We are often conscious that they do not state exactly and fully what is in our mind, and we are never quite sure that the hearer or reader will apprehend them in our sense. When one boy says to another: "I am studying very hard," does the word *study* mean exactly the same process to both boys? And how is the degree in *hard* to be measured? When one lady says to another: "I have a bad headache to-day," how is the friend to sympathize intelligently, unless she herself has had a touch of the same ailment? Even the most precise terms of every-day life—terms which, in law for instance, are strictly denotative, such words as father, mother, husband, wife—have not the same actual significance for any two persons.

163. Putting the problem in the form of a general statement, we may say that, while in every ordinary word of ordinary life there is a core of meaning, a central idea, so to speak, which cannot be exactly expressed, but which ought to be invariable, and which ought to be intelligible to all persons, yet around this central idea are clustered various secondary ideas which are different for each person. This capacity of association in the word we call its *Connotation*.*

One or two examples will suffice for illustration. We all use constantly the word "church." Its denotation is twofold: first, a building of some sort; second, an organization of which the building is the visible embodiment. Let us first consider the church as a building. Can the

* In Logic the term may have a quite different sense. See Jevons, *Elementary Lessons in Logic*, Lesson V.

word have the same connotation for any two persons? To a Roman the word may suggest St. Peter's or fifty other magnificent edifices; to a Parisian, Notre Dame or the Madeleine; to a Londoner, St. Paul's or Westminster Abbey. To a rural American it may suggest nothing more than a structure of pine, painted white, with a shingle roof. Next, how is it with the church as an organization? To a Roman Catholic the church is a vast hierarchy, an organization in which the clerical element has exclusive control. To an Anglican the church is also a hierarchy, theoretically all-powerful, but practically under the control of a parliament of which the members may be Jews and Dissenters. To an American Congregationalist the church is an association of independent local organizations in which the laity have a direct share in the administration.

Is it possible to indicate the connotation of the word "gentleman"? When we describe an acquaintance as "a perfect gentleman," are we able to state, even to ourselves, all the ingredients which make up the perfect compound? And can we be at all sure that those who hear or read us will have the same compound in mind? A "dude" may be said to be a man who is unnecessarily particular in dress and manners, who makes a parade of etiquette. But there are localities in which the natives would set down as a dude a man who insisted upon the exclusive use of his own towel and hair-brush. In one connection the word "dinner" may mean the plainest possible meal of meat and potatoes. In another it may mean an elaborate banquet, with music and toasts and speeches.

Even proper names have their connotation. George Washington meant to the Englishman of 1794 a very different being from the George Washington who is recognized by the Englishman of 1894. To the average Frenchman Prince Bismarck means one kind of man; to the average German, quite another. When we speak of Julius

Cæsar, do we have in mind the dissolute young patrician, or the great general, or the great legislator, or the unscrupulous political intriguer?

164. The ultimate secret of success in writing—in literary writing as distinguished from strictly scientific—lies in connotation. In strict science the less connotation the better: the business of scientific exposition is to denote objects and phenomena. But in writing that is to secure the personal sympathies of the ordinary reader there can scarcely be too much connotation, provided it be of the right sort.

Connotation is a secret. It cannot be taught, as sentence-structure and paragraph-structure are taught; it can be learned *only through close and patient observation of the manner of the best writers*. Good writing, in this respect, is like good manners: to acquire the art, one must keep good company. Herein lies the fundamental importance of literary models in every course, however brief, of training in composition.

Let us consider, *e. g.*, the two adjectives “sovereign” and “kingly.” In meaning they do not differ essentially. But their use is quite different. Thus Milton, in the sonnet *On His Blindness*, says of God:

his state
Is *kingly*; thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o’er land and ocean without rest.

whereas Shakespeare (see § 113) says of the dawn:

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with *sovereign* eye.

Apart from metre, to interchange the adjectives in the above passages would spoil the poetry.

Another pair of words interesting for their connotation are “woman” and the much-abused “lady.” The student has only to ask himself whether these terms are not happily discriminated by Hawthorne in § 48 and by De Quin-

cey in § 31; whether an interchange would not have marred the effect. A recent book upon field-sports is entitled: *Ladies in the Field*. Here *Ladies* is necessary; *Women* in the Field would have suggested hay-raking or hop-picking.

In the quotation from De Quincey, § 3, could *fire-place* or *chimney* be substituted for "hearth"? In Addison, § 4, would *washerwoman* be quite as apposite as "laundress"? In Macaulay, § 5 (3), would *vivid* have been as apposite as "lively"? "Ponderous" and "heavy" ought to be equivalent; yet we could scarcely substitute the second for the first in Hawthorne, § 8. In § 10, could Irving have written "the *insufferable* din"? Had Lowell, § 11, used some other expression for "smack," would his sarcasm have been as keen?

165. Connotation, taken in a still broader sense, is a property even of sentence-structure and paragraph-structure. This is true of the figures known as Climax and Anti-Climax (§ 95), Irony, Doubt, Interrogation (§ 115), and of the peculiar mode of expression called Hint, or Innuendo.

In Climax (and Anti-Climax) the terms *denote* merely an enumeration; but, as a series, they *connote* also a rising or falling scale of merit. In Irony, Doubt, Interrogation, the denotation is the direct opposite of the connotation.

An amusing story is told of an old-time New Englander, whose obituary notice ran thus: *

His English was purified by constant study of the best models: the English Bible, Shakespeare, Addison, and Fisher Ames.

The worthy writer of the notice intended merely to denote the favorite reading of the deceased. But, unfortunately, his phraseology connoted something more.

In Hint, or Innuendo, the writer stops short of a full

* Wendell, p. 113.

and explicit statement, but says just enough to arouse the reader's imagination to supply what is suppressed.

A good example is in George Eliot's *Silas Marner*, the chapter entitled *Conclusion* :

Miss Priscilla Lammeter was glad that she and her father had happened to drive up . . . just in time to see the pretty sight. They had come to keep Nancy company to-day, because Mr. Cass had had to go away . . . for special reasons. *That seemed a pity*, for otherwise he might have gone . . . to look on at the wedding feast, etc.

The *special reasons* for Mr. Cass's absence, the reasons that made his absence much more of a pity than it seemed to the unsuspecting Miss Priscilla, are not given. But the reader of the story will easily divine them.

The following is from Matthew Arnold's translation of Heine :

She scolds so sharp, that often her husband snatches his whip, and rushes down here, and gives it to the dogs and to the poor little boys. But his Majesty has expressed his disapproval of such proceedings, and has given orders that for the future his nephews are to be treated *differently from the dogs*. He has determined no longer to intrust the disciplining of his nephews to a mercenary stranger, but to *carry it out with his own hands*.—MATTHEW ARNOLD: *Heinrich Heine*, p. 165.

The relation of his Majesty, Pedro the Cruel, to his two nephews being like that of Richard III. to the two little princes in the Tower, we can imagine the change of treatment.

The execution of Sydney Carton, in *A Tale of Two Cities*, is equally noticeable :

She [the little seamstress, Sydney's prison companion] goes next before him—is gone ; the knitting-women [at the foot of the guillotine] count Twenty-two.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life, saith the Lord ; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live : and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

The murmuring of many voices, the upturning of many faces, the pressing of many footsteps in the outskirts of the crowd, so that it swells forward in a mass, like one great heave of water, all flashes away. Twenty-three.

The student who has learned what connotation is in general will have no difficulty in finding additional examples in his reading. To search for connotation is, in fact, one of the chief duties and pleasures in reading ; it brings the reader in touch with the writer. Whether we can use connotation effectively in our own writing will depend mainly upon the degree of our imagination. Only one general rule can be laid down : Make sure that your words and sentences do not suggest a meaning which you do not *wish* to convey.

PART IV.



MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS.

THE present work being primarily a manual for training in prose composition, its function is strictly at an end with Part III. But since many schools use only one textbook of instruction in English, Part IV. is added for practical convenience.



CHAPTER XVI.

POETRY.

166. General Nature of Poetry.—Poetry cannot be defined. All attempts at expressing in set words its distinctive qualities have failed, and will always fail.

There is only one characteristic of poetry in general: it is the expression of the ideal in the poet, and it appeals to the ideal in the hearer or reader. It expresses the ideal, in distinction from the actual. But, in its way, it is just as real as the actual is. For instance, Othello never actually existed, he is only an ideal creation by Shakespeare; nevertheless he is a real man, perfectly intelligible to every reader or spectator of the play. In like manner, *In Memoriam* is not the actual expression of Tennyson's thought and feeling, but the idealized; yet the poem is real to every one who interprets it.

Poetry has not only a different logic, *i. e.*, thought-sequence, from prose; it speaks a different dialect, and

breathes a different atmosphere. In passing from prose to poetry we enter a different world. Herein poetry differs from the prose fiction called a romance or a novel. The novelist creates a fictitious world as much like the actual as possible; the poet takes us wholly out of the actual. In the language of Coleridge, he wins from us that temporary suspension of disbelief which is called poetic faith. As long as the poem is consistent with itself and with the fundamental traits of human nature, it is real.

Furthermore, in all poetry there is a blending of thought and feeling. On the one hand, the views, ideas, beliefs, of the poet are all colored with emotion; on the other hand, the feeling is not mere emotion, it must have intellectual substance. Therefore a collection of verses in which thought abounds, but which leave the reader unmoved, is not a genuine poem; similarly, verses which merely play upon the reader's emotion, without quickening his intellectual activity, are not genuine poetry. The higher and nobler the poetry, the more complete is this blending of the emotional and the intellectual. We cannot read, for instance, Milton's sonnet *On His Blindness* without perceiving that our whole being, intellectual and emotional, is instantly raised to a higher plane.

Whoever desires to truly know what poetry is, must read a considerable amount of good poetry of the various kinds. After he has thus read with careful diligence, a further study of critical theories may be of service; but certainly not before.

In any event it is desirable to learn to distinguish the various kinds of poetry. Apparently these are endless, but in fact they may be classified under four general heads: Lyric; Narrative; Dramatic; Didactic and Satirical. The lines of division are occasionally, it is true, somewhat uncertain; that is, we may be puzzled to know under what head to put a certain poem, or group of poems

But in the main the classification is clear enough for practical purposes.

LYRIC POETRY.

167. This is the expression of the poet's own thoughts and feelings. According as the emotional element or the intellectual element preponderates, we may divide lyric poetry into two general classes, lyrics of emotion, and lyrics of reflection. At least, there are these two general divisions, although it may be difficult to decide which element actually does preponderate in a certain poem.

We are also to remember that a lyric poem, though originally the utterance of an individual poet, may become, by adoption, the expression of national or popular sentiment. This is the case with certain national hymns set to music, *e. g.*, *The Star-Spangled Banner*, *La Marseillaise*, *Die Wacht am Rhein*; or with such religious hymns as *Jesus, Lover of My Soul*, *Nearer, My God, to Thee*. Also, within narrower limits, songs favored by certain classes in the community, *e. g.*, college songs. An example of a song which is neither religious nor strictly national, but which is popular in the widest sense, is *Home, Sweet Home*.

Lyric poetry, as the etymological connection of the adjective with *lyre* suggests, was originally poetry sung to the accompaniment of a harp-like instrument. The greater part of ancient Greek lyric poetry was thus sung. And as long as the emotional element predominates, lyric poetry, even at the present day, may be characterized as song-poetry, or as poetry that can at least be set to music. But in proportion as the reflective element gains the ascendancy, the song-quality disappears, until at last we get such poems as Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty*, Milton's *Lycidas*, Keats's *On a Grecian Urn*, poems which we can scarcely imagine set to music.

It is not possible to arrange systematically all the vari-

eties of lyric poetry, and furnish each with an appropriate designation. They are as infinite as the moods and impulses of the human spirit. The following classification indicates at least the principal varieties. In the emotional class: poems of Conviviality; of Love and Friendship; of Patriotism and Religion. In the reflective class: poems of Nature; the Sonnet, the Ode; the Elegy and Threnody.

168. Poems of Conviviality. These, commonly called drinking-songs, are not often of a high order. In Shakespeare we find such specimens as Iago's song, *Othello*, ii. 3, "And let me the canakin clink, clink." See also Cleveland's *Square Cap*, § 202. The *Soldier's Song*, in the *Lady of the Lake*, vi., stanza v., is coarse in tone. Singularly graceful is Ben Jonson's *To Celia* ("Drink to me only with thine eyes"), although this is perhaps more of a love-song.

Poems of **Love** and **Friendship**, of a very high order, are numerous in our literature. Only a few need be pointed out, *e. g.*, Burns's *Highland Mary*, Herrick's *Counsel to Girls* ("Gather ye rose-buds while ye may"), Marlowe's *Passionate Shepherd* ("Come live with me and be my love").

Of domestic love we find such expressions as Blake's *Infant Joy*, and *Cradle Song*; in Tennyson's *Princess*, the songs "Sweet and low," and "As thro' the land at eve we went;" or Burns's "John Anderson my Jo, John," and Lady Nairn's *The Land o' the Leal*.

Love and friendship intermingled in retrospect are treated in such poems as Lamb's *The Old Familiar Faces* and Moore's *The Light of Other Days* ("Oft in the stilly night").

Patriotism finds expression in such poems as Campbell's *Battle of the Baltic*, Cowper's *Loss of the Royal George*, Wolfe's *Burial of Sir John Moore*, to mention only a few distinctively literary in form.

Poems of **Religion**, in the form of church hymns, are too familiar to need special mention here. The literature

of the medieval church is very rich in Latin hymns, *e. g.*, *Dies Ira*. Milton's poem on *Christ's Nativity* is better classed among the odes; Pope's *Universal Prayer* is hymnic. Among English hymn-writers the most famous are George Herbert, Watts, Charles Wesley, Keble, Heber, Neale (as a translator from the Latin), Faber, and Cardinal Newman.

169. Poems of **Nature** are found in great profusion in our literature; they range from simple description to abstruse reflection.

The term nature here includes animal life.

Among the simpler poems may be mentioned Wordsworth's *The Daffodils*, Burns's *To a Mouse*. Subtler and more complicated are Wordsworth's *To the Skylark* and Shelley's *To a Skylark*; Shelley's *The Cloud*; Bryant's *To a Waterfowl*.

Many of the longer poems upon inanimate nature are properly classified with didactic poetry.

The **Sonnet** is easily recognized by its form (see § 188). In substance it is a blending of the thoughts and feelings which have been occasioned by a certain event or incident. The sonnet is always highly reflective, and the thought should always be worked up to something like a philosophic conclusion. Among our earlier sonnet-writers the most famous are Sidney, Shakespeare, and Milton. The best known in the present century are Keats, Wordsworth, Mrs. Browning, Rossetti, and Charles Tennyson.

It is difficult to bring all the varieties of **Ode** under one general characterization. A specimen of the more impassioned kind, with brilliant narrative and dramatic touches, is Halleck's *Marco Bozzaris*; equally impassioned in tone, but more complex and obscure in its allusions, is Gray's *The Bard*. *The Progress of Poesy*, by Gray, is reflective. Dryden's *Alexander's Feast* was intended by its author to be impassioned, but in reality it is rather frigid and rhetorical. Lowell's *Commemoration Ode* and Wordsworth's

Intimations of Immortality are highly reflective, but with many beautiful descriptive touches.

170. The **Elegy** and the **Threnody**. These are closely related, being meditations upon the vanity of things earthly, or upon the grave problems of life and death. The Threnody is more personal, commemorating the death of one particular individual.

Gray's *Elegy*, as a specimen of its class, is too well known to need more than mention.

The great threnodies of our literature are Milton's *Lycidas*, Shelley's *Adonais*, Matthew Arnold's *Thyrsis*, and Tennyson's *In Memoriam*. The last-named is occupied with so many problems of science and philosophy as to have almost the character of a didactic poem. But the lyric and personal element predominates.

NARRATIVE POETRY.

Most of the varieties of story-telling in poetic form may be placed under one or the other of two general groups: the Epic, and the Romance.

171. Of the **Epic** there are three varieties.

1. The *Folk-Epic*, or genuine epic. This is not very abundantly represented. In the literature of the world at large there are only seven or eight examples: the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, in Sanskrit; the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, in Greek; the *Beowulf*-poem, in Anglo-Saxon; the *Nibelungen Lied*, in mediæval German; the *Kalevala*, in Finnish; and perhaps the *Æneid*, in Latin.

The characteristics of the folk-epic are the following. The story itself embodies the mythological, religious, and historico-legendary ideas of the folk among whom it originates. It originates and is developed among this folk in a primitive state of civilization, and independently of any one poet, although its final shaping may be the work of one, or perhaps more than one, individual poet. Lastly, the metre also must be indigenous in the folk.

The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the *Beowulf* and the *Kalevala*, exhibit these characteristics fully. The *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, although indigenous in every respect, are so interminable and so shapeless that they scarcely deserve the title of *poems*. The metre of the *Nibelungen Lied* is perhaps not quite German in its ultimate origin. The metre of the *Æneid*, and a good deal of the substance of the first six books, are borrowed from the Greek, while its spirit is not that of a primitive age, but that of its author, Virgil, reflecting the polished court of Augustus.

The *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* will give one an idea of the folk-epic in its most artistic form; the *Kalevala*, in its crudest form; the *Beowulf*, in its arrested form, about half way to artistic finish. The *Nibelungen Lied* is artistically finished in its structure, but is overlaid with too much medieval frippery and sentimentality.

2. The *Art Epic*.—Leading examples of this are the *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, in English; Klopstock's *Messiah*, in German. In such poetry we find a well-known author, representative of the full intellectual and moral culture of his folk, treating a religious theme not indigenous to the folk but adopted by it, and treating this theme under the influence of or in emulation of the classic epics.

Longfellow's *Hiawatha* is also to be regarded as an art epic. The story is taken from the myths and legends of the North American Indians, and is wholly foreign to our Anglo-American race. The metre is that of the *Kalevala* (see § 192).

3. The *Allegorical Epic*.—Under this heading we may place Spenser's *Faery Queen*, Langland's *Vision of Piers the Plowman* (14th century), and the like. The personages are symbolic, not real (see § 117), and the doctrinal teaching is obvious throughout.

Is Dante's great poem to be placed here? The title is *Divine Comedy*. The term *Comedy*, however, as used by

Dante, did not suggest necessarily anything of a dramatic form, but meant merely a story that began sadly and ended pleasantly. Dante's poem begins in hell and ends in heaven. In form, it is a Vision, though this is not so explicitly stated as in the case of *Piers the Plowman* and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. In movement, it is narrative; the poet is led through the regions of hell and purgatory by the spirit of Virgil, and afterward led to heaven by the spirit of Beatrice. But the personages introduced are not all mere symbols of vice and virtue; many of them are well-known figures of history.

There is, further, the *Mock Epic*, in which the poet narrates a humorous incident of ordinary life, exaggerating it greatly, and imitating the tone and style of the classic epics. The best example in English is Pope's *Rape of the Lock*. Not only does Pope mimic grandiloquently the diction of Homer and Virgil, but he introduces the sylphs in parody of the gods and goddesses.

172. Romance.—The term is used here in a very wide sense, including all narrative poems which have not the grand proportions and mythological or ethical spirit of the epic.

1. The *Romance of Chivalry*.—This form of poetry, extremely popular in the Middle Ages, but falling into disfavor in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, has been partially revived in the present century. The stories may be classified in three general groups, according to their subject matter, viz., the Charlemagne stories, the Arthurian, and the Classical.

The Charlemagne stories have for their subject the great Frankish emperor, as he appeared to the credulous imagination of later generations, surrounded by his twelve peers of the Round Table. The best known of his attendants are Roland, Turpin, and the traitor Ganelon. These stories were extremely popular in the Middle Ages, in France, Germany, and England. At the battle of Hastings one

of Duke William's minstrels is said to have ridden out in front of the Norman army, singing of the death of Roland. But the Charlemagne romances have not been revived in English literature of the present century.

The Arthurian stories have been revived for modern English readers in Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, Swinburne's *Tristram of Lyonesse*, Matthew Arnold's *Tristram and Iseult*.

The term "idyll" is not happily used by Tennyson. It means in strictness "a little picture," *i. e.*, a short story of real rather than of legendary life. The idyll is in verse what *genre* and *still-life* are in painting. Whereas Tennyson's Arthurian poems are long stories of heroic prowess. Introducing all the leading personages of Arthur's court, they present what is technically known as the Arthurian cycle.

The Arthurian stories were, it is believed, originally the embodiment of certain mythological ideas of the Celtic race. But, even in the earliest medieval written form in which we find them, the mythological element is practically eliminated, and beings who may have been primarily gods and goddesses and demi-gods appear merely as men and women. The few traces of their descent from the gods can be detected only by the special student of comparative mythology.

The Classical Romances, embodying the curious medieval conceptions of the great men of Greece and Rome, notably of Alexander the Great, were likewise popular in the Middle Ages, but have not been revived of late.

Under this head we may put also the medieval versions, or perversions, of the Homeric and Virgilian stories of the Greeks and Trojans. The best known of these is the story of Troilus and Cressida, narrated by Chaucer and dramatized by Shakespeare.

2. *Ecclesiastical Romances*.—These are commonly known as Lives of the Saints. The earliest medieval lives of the

saints rested upon a substantial basis of fact. But in time they absorbed much popular superstition, and even borrowed certain features from the romances of chivalry. In the later versions it is not easy to separate fact from fiction.

Among the best known may be mentioned the lives of Stephen, Andrew, Martin, Cecilia, Margaret, Katherine, Lawrence, Nicholas, Christopher, Thomas of Canterbury.

This branch of literature has not met with much favor from nineteenth-century poets, unless we except Aubrey De Vere's *Legends of the Saxon Saints*, Tennyson's *St. Simon Stylites*, Matthew Arnold's *St. Brandan*, and a few others.

173. Romances of Real Life.—These may be divided into Historical and Private.

3. *Historical Romance.*—The nature of this is abundantly illustrated in such poems as Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum*, Scott's *Marmion* and *Lady of the Lake*, and Longfellow's *Evangeline*. The background is historical; the fortunes of the personages are directly influenced by the great political movements of the time.

4. *Private Romance.*—Under this head we may put such poems as Tennyson's *Enoch Arden*, Browning's *Flight of the Duchess*.

5. *Idylls.*—The idyll has been defined above to be a little picture of still-life. The fashion was set by the Greek poet Theocritus, and imitated in Roman literature, *e. g.*, by Virgil, in his Eclogues. Since many of the personages in this class of poetry were shepherds or goatherds, the poetry itself was commonly called pastoral, or bucolic. In several of Virgil's eclogues the rustic characters discourse—quite out of their sphere—upon political and social events of the day. The medieval imitators of Virgil developed this feature to excess, so that a pastoral poem came to mean a short piece, usually a dialogue, in which the poet uttered, from the lips of nominal shepherds, his own views upon the subjects that interested him most deeply. This medieval type of pastoral poetry is repre-

sented in Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar*, a collection of twelve eclogues (one for each month), in which the nominal shepherds discuss, among other topics, the religious controversies of the sixteenth century. Many of the allusions are veiled; the poet evidently deemed it best to be cautious.

It is to be remembered, however, that shepherds and shepherdesses and goatherds are not essential to idyllic poetry. Nor is it at all necessary that the characters should be interested in other matters than those of everyday life. Tennyson has reverted, in many of his shorter poems, to the spirit and manner of Theocritus. Among his genuine nineteenth-century idylls may be mentioned the following: *The Miller's Daughter*, *The Gardener's Daughter*, *Dora*, *Audley Court*, *Walking to the Mail*, *Edwin Morris*.

It is also to be remembered that the term pastoral is not restricted to narrative poetry. One variety of the drama is known as the pastoral. In Milton's *Lycidas* (see § 170) the life described and the names of the persons commemorated are conventionally pastoral. Similarly, Matthew Arnold's *Thyrsis* has touches of the pastoral.

6. *Ballads*.—It is scarcely possible to define precisely a ballad, beyond saying that it is a narrative poem, usually very short, frequently with a good deal of dialogue, abrupt in style, impassioned in tone, and intensely dramatic or at least scenic in its action. The genuine ballad is a product of the folk, *i. e.*, it cannot be assigned to any one author. But many excellent imitations of the folk-ballad have been written by eminent poets, *e. g.*, Whittier's *Maud Muller*, Longfellow's *Wreck of the Hesperus*, Kingsley's *Three Fishers*, Cowper's humorous poem of *John Gilpin*. Most of the old folk-ballads are composed in rugged popular metre, with four or three beats to the line, and are upon hunting, fighting, and love-making.*

* An excellent collection, for the general public, is that by F. B. Gummere, *Old English Ballads*. Boston; Ginn. 1894.

DRAMATIC POETRY.

The general nature of the drama is stated in § 36. Within the narrow limits of the present chapter only a few of the leading varieties of dramatic form in English literature can be indicated.

174. Historical Sketch.—The drama, as we find it fully developed in the works of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, was the product of many literary forces, some of which had been working for several centuries. The principal of these forces were: the Church Plays; the Moralities; the Chronicle-History; the Classical or Pseudo-Classical drama; the Continental drama, chiefly the Italian and French.

Church Plays.—In the later Middle Ages there was a remarkable growth of dramatic, or rather scenic, representations of events recorded in the Old and New Testaments. These representations were at first strictly religious, *i. e.*, they were given by ecclesiastics, in the church-building, and in Latin. The usual occasions were the Easter and Christmas festivals. But in time these representations became secularized: the parts were taken by laymen, the vernacular was substituted for Latin, and the representation took place in public buildings, or in the city streets and squares. More and more attention was paid to costume and stage-effect. The religious play lost much of its sacredness and became an entertaining histrionic spectacle. The comic element also crept in. Certain persons of the Old and New Testaments were frequently, if not usually, treated as mirth-provoking, *e. g.*, Noah and his wife, and Herod the Great, the author of the massacre of the Innocents at Bethlehem. Herod is usually represented as a ranting braggart; Noah's wife refuses to enter the ark until she is soundly beaten. In the Towneley collection there is introduced, just before the scene of the Annunciation

to the shepherds, a broad farce of sheep-stealing in the fourteenth century.

The exact designation of a church play founded upon the Bible is *mystery*.* In England there was a marked tendency to put together a number of mysteries, extending from the Creation to the Last Judgment. Such a collection was called a *collective mystery*. Thus we have the York, Towneley, Chester, and Coventry collections.

Not only stories from the Bible, but also the lives of the saints, were dramatized. Such a representation was called a *miracle play*, and was nearly always given on the calendar day of the saint. But in England the verbal distinction between mystery and miracle was not carefully observed, the mysteries being usually called miracles.† Thus Longfellow has introduced in his *Golden Legend* a play which he calls *The Nativity, a Miracle Play*; it is in imitation of the medieval church plays.

The church plays, although mortally wounded by the Reformation, survived feebly through the reign of Elizabeth, dying with her. It is therefore not only possible, but quite probable, that Shakespeare attended the performance of a collective mystery like that of Coventry.

Moralities.—These were dramatized allegories (see § 117). At first they were mere representations of the struggle between virtue and vice in its ordinary aspects. But in the course of the Reformation they were frequently made the vehicle of religious controversy. Occasionally a morality was thrown into the form of a short story, in which

* The better spelling would be *mistry*. The word is not from the Latin *mysterium*, Greek *μυστήριον*, "secret doctrine," but from the Old French *mestier*, Latin *ministerium*, "profession, trade, handicraft." A church play was usually acted by the members of a trade-guild. Thus the play of the Deluge, in the Chester collection, was given, very appropriately, by the guild of water-carriers.

† See A. W. Pollard, *English Miracle Plays, Moralities, and Interludes*. Clarendon Press. 1890. (A very serviceable collection of specimens, with notes, glossary, and introduction.) K. L. Bates, *The English Religious Drama*. New York; Macmillan. 1893.

three or four typical characters were introduced and a striking situation humorously presented. In this form the morality is called an *interlude*. A well-known specimen is that called *The Four P's*, by John Heywood, in the reign of Queen Mary. The four P's are the Pardoner, the Palmer, the Poticary, and the Pedlar. The comic situation is that of a competition, to decide which of the four can tell the biggest lie. The chief service rendered by the Morality-Interludes to the later drama was in promoting the sense of humor and wit, and conciseness of dialogue.

Chronicle-History.—The custom of dramatizing the biblical narrative led to the custom of dramatizing the more striking events in the reign of an English sovereign. The earliest known example is Bale's play of *King John*. In the hands of the immediate predecessors of Shakespeare and of Shakespeare himself, the history-play became an acknowledged dramatic form.

Classical Drama.—How far the genuine Greek drama was known and understood in England in the sixteenth century, is a difficult question. It is probable that none of the great English dramatists had a clear understanding of Greek art. Their knowledge of the classical drama was confined in the main to Plautus and Terence, and to the plays which pass under the name of Seneca. From these last they borrowed at least one practical feature, viz., the arrangement of a play in five acts.

The observance of the *Unities* became a burning question in the latter part of the century. Certain Italian commentators upon Aristotle, misapprehending the spirit of his *Poetics* and knowing little of the actual practice of the Greeks, treated the practice of Seneca as an absolute canon of classical art. They laid down the rule of the three Unities: of place, of time, of action. A play must not shift from place to place, but must be confined to one city. The time represented is not to exceed twenty-four hours. The action is to be unbroken and centred around

one or two persons. This doctrine was accepted in England by certain would-be classical authorities; notably by Sir Philip Sidney, who exerted all his influence to enforce it. But the great English dramatists, Greene, Peele, Marlowe, Shakespeare, paid little heed to it. In fact, not only was such a rigid doctrine in conflict with English notions of literary freedom, but it was in conflict with dramatic precedent. For centuries the English play-goer had been accustomed to religious performances in which the time represented extended through years and even centuries. To him there was no impropriety, then, in prolonging the time and shifting the scene of a secular performance. At all events, the three unities were not adopted by the great body of English playwrights. The most notable English drama that professedly observes them is Milton's *Samson Agonistes*.*

Continental Drama.—The influence exerted upon the Elizabethan drama by the contemporary drama of France and Italy has not yet been studied exhaustively. So far as one may judge from present information, it seems that the influence was not very great. France and Italy, having accepted the unities which England rejected, could scarcely exert much influence upon English dramatic structure. A moderate amount of dramatic material was borrowed, and some few plays were translated. But, in the main, the English drama went its own peculiar way.

175. To understand aright the great English drama centred around Shakespeare, we must keep in mind certain general facts.

1. The age was one of abnormal mental activity. The great religious disputes, ending in the rupture with Spain and the overthrow of the Armada, had started England upon its career of maritime supremacy. Bold unscrupulous adventure was the fashion. But, running parallel

* The unities are observed in *The Tempest*. But the observance of them does not seem to have been Shakespeare's professed object.

with this outward enterprise, there was an equally strong current of religious and philosophic inquiry, which manifested itself later in the Puritan Rebellion. Sidney and Raleigh may serve as representatives of this special combination of outward energy and inner spiritual life.

2. The stage was the only public outlet for artistic impulses and aspirations. Other European countries were cultivating other arts. Italy, in particular, was at the height of its development in painting and sculpture. England had only its drama; the theatre was the meeting-place for those who wished to enjoy the gifts of art and for those who sought public distinction therein.

3. After centuries of change and slow growth, the language attained, in a large number of young writers, a freshness and a power of expression which have since been rarely equalled and never surpassed. The greatest poets of our century have paid homage to Elizabethan English as a medium of poetic utterance.

It is not always possible to account for social phenomena. After all the recognizable elements have been carefully estimated, there is a residuum of mystery. Of the great English dramatists in the second half of Elizabeth's reign and throughout that of James I. we must assert this much, that they exhibit, in their conception and treatment of human character, an intuitive power which we vainly look for in any subsequent generation.

176. The chief species of drama are Tragedy and Comedy.

In **Tragedy** we have an action in which the leading person, hero or heroine, struggles against and finally succumbs to superior powers. The struggle must be a noble one, *i. e.*, not for a petty object, and the disastrous ending of the hero must purify the spirit of the beholder through the emotions of sympathy and fear. The beholder must be able to sympathize with the hero, as with a being like himself, not wholly good and not wholly bad; he must

also be able to fear a like fate for himself in like circumstances.

The superior powers against which the hero struggles were, in the Greek drama, the decrees of the gods, a fate technically called *nemesis*. In the English drama these powers are usually man's innate evil propensities. But the English drama is not wholly free from the doctrine of *nemesis*. Thus Shakespeare's *Richard III.* is a man without a conscience, a man of whom we cannot say that he succumbs to evil desires, for evil is his very life. He succumbs to the *nemesis* which overtakes excess. *Macbeth*, at the very beginning of the play, has already succumbed to ambition; the witches merely voice his own half-formed designs. The action of the play consists of a series of triumphs, followed by a series of reverses, in which *Macbeth* succumbs to the *nemesis* of excess. *Othello* and *King Lear*, on the other hand, represent genuine struggle with evil. *Othello* succumbs to the spirit of jealousy, *Lear* to unbridled anger.

In **Comedy** also there is a conflict; but it does not end disastrously, nor does it usually enter upon the graver side of life. More commonly it exhibits the foibles and follies of man, rather than his vices and crimes.

The ordinary English reader's estimate of comedy is too much influenced by the example of such plays as Shakespeare's *Tempest*, *As You Like It*, *Merchant of Venice*, and *Winter's Tale*. These, especially the last two, almost touch the field of tragedy. *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and the humorous parts of *Henry IV.* are more representative of normal comedy. Furthermore, *The Tempest* is lifted above the ordinary by its supernatural machinery. The same may be said of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; the word *dream* here is significant.

The aim of comedy is to purify the manners, habits, and sometimes the vices of men, by holding them up to ridicule. Thus avarice, boasting, drunkenness, absurd

social ambition, and the like are enacted on the comic stage. The spectator is warned against such errors in himself, by seeing how absurd they appear in others.

The *Farce* is a play, usually very short, in which there is no serious element, or scarcely any. The situation is improbable, the characters are evident exaggerations. We merely laugh and are satisfied. The chief utility of a farce is as a prelude to a more regular comedy; or as an after-play, relaxing the mind from the tension of a tragedy.

177. It is stated above (§ 174) that the English dramatists rejected the doctrine of the three unities. A few additional words, however, must be said concerning the unity of action. In every good drama, ancient or modern, unity of action, in some sense, is indispensable. But the ancients, and their modern imitators, chiefly the French classic dramatists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, interpreted the term unity with great strictness. They demanded the highest degree of singleness and concentration of action. They did not indulge in side-issues, or in any digression from and return to the main action. With this we may contrast the manner of Shakespeare, both in tragedy and in comedy.

In *King Lear* there is the main action, the development of the direct relations between Lear and his three daughters. In addition to this, there is the sub-action of the Gloucester family, the intrigue of Edmund against Edgar; and a second sub-action, the intrigues of Goneril and Regan with Edmund. Yet these sub-actions, and some others less conspicuous, although they seem at times to be digressions from the main issue, are all the while co-operating with it, hastening and intensifying the final ruin of Lear and Cordelia.

In the *Merchant of Venice* there is the main action, a blending of the Jew story and the Caskets story, originally distinct. There is also the underplot of Jessica, Lorenzo, and Launcelot, which "finds occupation for" a number

of minor characters and bridges over the interval between the execution of Antonio's bond to Shylock and its forfeiture.*

DIDACTIC POETRY AND SATIRE.

178. The object of Didactic poetry is to combine pleasure with direct instruction. But to be genuinely didactic, the poem must be lyric in form; if it is narrative or dramatic, it comes under the head of Allegory or Morality (see §§ 171, 174).

Furthermore, the instruction must be philosophical or ethical, rather than technical; it must liberalize and purify the reader's spirit, instead of merely imparting useful knowledge.

Memorial verses, in which facts, rules, names, dates, etc. are thrown into metre, usually rhymed metre, in order that they may be better remembered, *e. g.*:

Thirty days hath September,
April, June, and November.

are not poetry. Nor can we confer the distinction of poetry upon the rhyming chronicles of English history, popular in the Middle Ages; they are merely versified facts, interspersed with fiction from the romances of chivalry.

Virgil's *Georgics*, in substance a discourse upon rural life, are composed in the poet's best style. "With the various discussions on corn, vines, cattle, and bees, he has interwoven every philosophical, moral, or mythological episode on which he could with propriety seize." The *Georgics* have always been a favorite study with Latinists. But it may be suspected that they owe their chief attractiveness to the poet's polished diction, rich vocabulary of rural terms, and array of facts. Without the *Georgics* we should be ignorant of many important features of Roman

* Moulton, *Shakespeare*, pp. 76, 206.

life. Hence it is a not unwarrantable inference that the value of the *Georgics* is scholarly rather than purely poetical.

Virgil has had not a few imitators in English, *e. g.*, Armstrong, in his *Art of Preserving Health*, Erasmus Darwin in his *Botanic Garden, Zoonomia, and Phytologia*. But if Virgil's *Georgics* are indeed poetry, though of a debatable kind, it is quite certain that the English imitations are not.

In fact, for practical modern purposes, it is safer to restrict the conception of didactic poetry to such poems as treat of human feelings and the problems of human life in a philosophic spirit. It would be useless to attempt to define a didactic poem. The nature of it is best learned from concrete examples.

There are two general classes: that in which the didactic element predominates, and that in which the emotional predominates.

The first class is less poetical and less interesting to the general reader. Some of the poems, indeed, are decidedly tiresome. One of the best in the class is Pope's *Essay on Man*; one of the worst is Tupper's *Proverbial Philosophy*; in the middle we may put Young's *Night Thoughts*.

Such poems as Thomson's *Seasons*, Cowper's *Task*, Aken-side's *Pleasures of the Imagination*, Campbell's *Pleasures of Hope*, Rogers's *Pleasures of Memory*, stand between the first class and the second. They exhibit a tendency to description of nature, on the one hand; on the other, to narrative. Sometimes the didactic predominates, sometimes the emotional.

The second class includes some of the treasures of our literature. It is enough to mention only one or two, *e. g.*, Bryant's *Thanatopsis*, Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*, and many passages in the *Excursion*; as a whole, the last-named poem is a quasi-autobiography. In reading such poetry we feel ourselves lifted to the higher ideal plane mentioned in § 166.

179. As the object of didactic poetry is to inculcate wisdom directly, so the object of **Satire** is to inculcate it indirectly, by exposing folly and vice to ridicule.

Satire may be directed against individuals, or against classes of men, or against social and political movements. Frequently these three kinds of object are combined.

Mere denunciation in metrical form, however keen, is not enough to constitute genuine satire. The idealizing spirit is as necessary here as in other kinds of poetry, but it operates inversely. In didactic poetry, for example, the poet points out certain ideals to which we should aspire. In satire the poet points out wherein the persons and institutions attacked fall short of their own ideals. In this discrepancy between the man as he appears to himself, and the man as he appears to others, lies the sting of satire. *E. g.*, Dryden thus characterizes one who had deserted to the other side :

They got a villain, and we lost a fool.

Absalom and Achitophel, ii. 363.

The contrast between what the man attempted and what he actually accomplished is highly ludicrous. There is a like contrast in the sketch of the Duke of Buckingham :

A man so various that he seemed to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome :
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,
Was everything by starts, and nothing long ;
But, in the course of one revolving moon,
Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon.

Absalom and Achitophel, i. 545.

The great masters of satire are Dryden, Pope, Byron, and—in America—Lowell. Satire is not usually read in school. Yet there can be no theoretical objection to reading extracts from *The Biglow Papers*. A few pages of Lowell's brilliant but not unkind ridicule would at least enable us to realize Burns's injunction : "To see ourselves as others see us."

CHAPTER XVII.

METRE.

[WITHIN the narrow limits of the present chapter nothing can be attempted beyond the presentation of a few general principles and a few leading forms. Those persons who wish to pursue the subject further should study: Parsons, *English Versification*. Boston; Leach, Shewell, and Sanborn. 1891; Corson, *A Primer of English Verse*. Boston; Ginn. 1892. Mayor's work, entitled *Chapters on English Metre*. London; Clay. 1886, is too technical for the ordinary reader. Schipper's *Englische Metrik*, Bonn; Strauss. 1881-1888 (three volumes), is a mine of information, but can be used only by the specialist. Guest's *History of English Rhythms*, even in the re-issue by Skeat, is worthless, except for its illustrative quotations; the author's metrical theories are untenable.]

1. GENERAL TERMS.

180. The English term *Verse* means strictly a metrical line. By extension, the term is used to designate a certain kind of line, *e. g.*, "blank verse," "heroic verse," etc.; sometimes, also, to designate the general metrical quality of a certain poet, *e. g.*, Shakespearean verse, Miltonic, etc. Still further, verse is used for poetry in general, as when we say that Milton wrote both prose and verse.*

Not infrequently a section of a hymn is called a verse; *e. g.*, the second verse of the twentieth hymn. This is incorrect; the proper term for a section of a hymn, or of any other poem, is *Stanza* (see § 185).

181. By *Foot* we mean the unit of measurement of the length of the line. In English verse the foot usually con-

* The use of *verse* to designate a portion of a chapter of the Bible, or passages in the services of the church, need not be discussed here.

sists of two syllables, one accented (or stressed), the other unaccented. *E. g.:*

So ma|ny worlds, | so much | to do.

TENNYSON: *In Memoriam*, lxxiii.

The foot of the above is called *iambic*; the verse, or line, is described as *iambic tetrameter*.

In the following:

Far and | wide a|mong the | nations.

LONGFELLOW: *Hiawatha*, xviii.

the foot is called *trochaic*, and the line is *trochaic tetrameter*. In the following:

Home they | brought her | warrior | dead.

TENNYSON: *The Princess*, v. (Song at end).

the final unstressed syllable is wanting.

Occasionally in a line made up of dissyllabic feet we get two unaccented syllables in a foot, as in *warrior* in the above; and in the second foot of the following:

With gar|rulous ease | and oil|ly cour|tesies.

TENNYSON: *The Princess*, i. 162.

In certain forms of English verse the foot is regularly trisyllabic; *e. g.:*

All the heart | and the soul | and the sen|ses fore|ver in joy.

BROWNING: *Saul* (ix.) 80.

The above is called an *anapæstic pentameter*. The following:

Brightest and | best of the | sons of the | morning.

HEBER.

is *dactylic tetrameter*; but the last foot is only dissyllabic, and may be regarded as either a trochee or a spondee.

English poetry does not, in general, favor anapæstic

verse for long poems ; Browning's *Saul* is exceptional. For the *dactylic hexameter*, see § 195.

Frequently in iambic verse we get a line like the following :

Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

COLERIDGE: *Chamouni Hymn*, 85.

This might be scanned :

Earth, with | her thou'sand voic'es, prai'ses God ; or,

Earth, with her thou'sand, etc.

In the second method of scanning, *Earth, with her thou'* would be called a choriambus. But usually the best method is to scan :

Earth, | with her thou'sand, etc.

See also § 197.

182. We speak of Feet in English verse, and give to them such names as iambus, trochee, anapæst, dactyl, spondee. These terms are borrowed from the metrical system of Greek and Latin, and retained as a practical convenience. But it is always to be borne in mind that the Greeks and Romans *measured* their feet by vocalic or syllabic length : an iambus was a foot composed of one short and one long syllable ; a trochee, of one long and one short ; a spondee, of two long. Whereas in English verse the feet are not measured by vocalic length, but are marked off by that voice-stress which we call accent : an English iambus is a line-section composed of an unaccented and an accented syllable, etc. Since every syllable in English is either accented or unaccented, it is not possible to have a genuine spondee.

The Greeks and Romans, in fact, measured longs and shorts almost as accurately as we measure notes in music.*

* A. J. Ellis, *Quantitative Pronunciation of Latin*, proposes to develop the feeling for division of time by using a swinging pendulum.

But to us a line is an alternation of accented and unaccented, *i. e.*, loud and not loud, syllables. As long, therefore, as the line has the required number of accented syllables (we might call them *beats*), our ear is satisfied. We do not care greatly whether there is now and then an unaccented syllable too many or too few, or even whether, as in the so-called choriambus, the order of succession of accented and unaccented syllables is now and then reversed.

English verse, then, is elastic; it is the expression of power and freedom. Nevertheless, the English ear is not wholly insensible to quantity. This is evident from the principle of compensation. Thus, when Tennyson sings:

To^x put | in['] words | the^x grief | I['] feel.

In Memoriam, v.

the first foot, *To^x put[']*, has the stress on a vowel evidently short. But in the last foot, the pronoun *I*, although it has not the metrical stress, is too evidently long and prominent to be slurred over like *To*, *in*, *the*; the voice instinctively lingers upon it. And this compensates for the shortness of *put*.

The verse of our best poets is full of such compensation. To recognize and give expression to it in reading should be the aim of every student. See § 197.

In verse of popular origin a foot is frequently without its unstressed syllable, the place of which is supplied by a *Pause*, equivalent to a rest in music. *E. g.*:

Till said to Tweed:
Though ye rin wi' speed,
And I rin slaw,
Whar ye droon ae man
I droon twa.

To make the underlying metrical scheme plainer, we

might fill in the pauses, spoiling the rugged beauty of the original :

The Till | did say | to Tweed :
 Though ye | do run | with speed,
 And I | do run | so slow,
 Where ye | can drown | one man
 There I | am drow|ning two.

The songs in Shakespeare's plays, being borrowed or imitated from popular poetry, also exhibit frequent pauses. And occasionally we find a pause even in lyric poetry of a more cultivated sort, *e. g.*, in Tennyson's well-known song :

Break, | break, | break,
 On thy cold | gray stones, | O sea.

Also in blank verse, though more rarely ; *e. g.* :

Unless her prayers . . .
 . . . relieve him from the wrath
 Of grea|test jus|tice. Write, | write, | Rinaldo.

All's Well, iii. 4, 28.

The indispensable elocutionary pause between the first and second *write* not only supplies the missing syllable but makes the urgency of the request more dramatic.

2. THE SINGLE LINE.

183. The single line may range in length from one foot to eight. Thus a trochee :

Splashing,
 Dashing.

or an iambus :

Here end.

For the opposite extreme, an eight-foot line (octameter), the following may serve:

Dear^ˈ my^ˌ | friend^ˈ and^ˌ | fellow^ˈ | student^ˈ, || I^ˈ would^ˌ | lean^ˈ my^ˌ | spirit^ˈ | o'er^ˈ
you.^ˌ—MRS. BROWNING: *Lady Geraldine's Courtship*.

For a seven-foot line (heptameter or septenary):

There's^ˈ not^ˌ | a^ˈ joy^ˌ | the^ˈ world^ˌ | can^ˈ give^ˌ || like^ˈ that^ˌ | it^ˈ takes^ˌ | away.^ˈ
BYRON: *Youth and Age*.

Concerning the very short lines, *i. e.*, lines under four feet, it is to be said that their use is confined to short lyric poems. Lines of one foot, or of two feet, are not often found, except in light or humorous poetry, or as refrains.
E. g.:

Who would be
A merman bold?—TENNYSON: *The Mermaid*.

Sun comes, moon comes,
Time slips away.

Sun sets, moon sets,
Love, fix a day.—TENNYSON: *When?*

Note the use of the name Oriana as a refrain:

My heart is wasted with my woe,
Oriana.

TENNYSON: *Ballad of Oriana*.

Also:

Forever-never!

Never-forever!

LONGFELLOW: *The Old Clock on the Stairs*.

Lines of seven and eight feet have never established themselves in popular favor. They look ungainly in print, and—a much more serious fault—they manifest an insuperable tendency to break up into short lines of four and three feet, or four and four. One of the few poems of eight feet that have established themselves is Tennyson's *Locksley Hall*:

Comrades, | leave me | here a | little, || while as | yet 'tis | early | morn.

The last foot, *morn*, is without unstressed syllable.

The only lines available for poems of considerable length are those of four, five, and six feet. They are treated in §§ 192-196.

In lines of five and six feet there is usually a *Cæsura*, i. e., the line is cut into two portions, sometimes equal, or nearly equal, sometimes very unequal. The *meaning* requires the reader to stop for a moment and then resume. Thus the monotony of a regular succession of unstressed and stressed syllables is broken up. The *cæsura*, which is technically marked by a ||, is of great importance in blank-verse (see § 198). In the Alexandrine line its normal place is at the end of the third foot.

3. THE STANZA.

184. The stanza is a combination of lines serving as the unit of measurement of a poem, or section of a poem. Thus Longfellow's *The Village Blacksmith* is composed in eight stanzas, of six lines each. Spenser's *Faery Queen* is arranged in books, each book in cantos, each canto having a certain number of stanzas of nine lines each.

The form or character of a stanza is determined partly by the number of lines, partly by the metre of the single lines, partly by the arrangement of rhymes.

In line-number, the stanza may range from two lines to nine.* As a specimen of two-line stanza (commonly known as Couplet), short lines, Longfellow's *Daybreak* may serve :

A wind came up out of the sea,
And said, "O mists, make room for me."

For two-line stanza, long lines, Tennyson's *Locksley Hall* :

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

Three-line stanzas (Triplets) are not common, except

* There are longer stanzas, but they are unusual.

when accompanied by a refrain. Tennyson's *The Two Voices* may be taken in illustration:

A still small voice spake unto me,
 "Thou art so full of misery,
 Were it not better not to be?"

The four-line stanza (Quatrain) is the favorite of lyric poetry, especially in songs.

A Quatrain having only one rhyme is quite rare. Usually the quatrain is in alternate rhymes, *e. g.*:

The swallow, oft, beneath my thatch,
 Shall twitter from her clay-built nest;
 Oft shall the pilgrim lift the latch,
 And share my meal, a welcome guest.

ROGERS: *A Wish*.

The more we live, more brief appear
 Our life's succeeding stages:
 A day to childhood seems a year,
 And years like passing ages.

CAMPBELL: *The River of Life*.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
 The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear:
 Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
 And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

GRAY: *Elegy*.

In the above from Rogers each line is in iambic tetrameter; in Gray, iambic pentameter. In Campbell, the second and fourth lines are in iambic trimeter, with an extra syllable (unaccented) at the end.

In the following the rhymes are in couplets:

Music, when soft voices die,
 Vibrates in the memory—
 Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
 Live within the sense they quicken.

SHELLEY: *To —*

That form of quatrain (iambic tetrameter) in which the first and fourth lines rhyme, and the second and third, is not common. It was used before Tennyson, by Ben

Jonson, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, and Byron. But Tennyson's remarkable use of it in his great threnody has gained for it the title of the In Memoriam stanza.*

185. Hymns.—These are usually in the form of quatrains. The varieties most employed are: Long Metre, Short Metre, and Common Metre.

Long Metre is a quatrain of iambic tetrameters. *E. g. :*

Come gracious Spirit, heavenly dove,
With light and comfort from above :
Be thou our guardian, thou our guide ;
O'er every thought and step preside.

Common Metre is a quatrain in which the first and third lines are iambic tetrameter, the second and fourth iambic trimeter. *E. g. :*

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down
And glory shone around.

In *Short Metre* the third line is iambic tetrameter ; the other three lines are iambic trimeters. *E. g. :*

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love ;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Usually the rhymes alternate, as in the above.

Other hymn-metres are designated by the number of syllables in the lines. Thus we have "Eights and Sevens," "Eights, Sevens, and Fours," "Sevens," "Sevens and Sixes," etc. By reason of their simplicity and regularity these hymn-stanzas are easy to read. One has only to determine whether the line is iambic or trochaic. Thus :

Love divine, all love excelling,

is trochaic. But :

Abide with me : fast falls the eventide.

is iambic.

* A very just appreciation of the peculiar quality of this metre is found in Stedman, *Victorian Poets* (Revised Edition), p. 169.

186. Stanzas of five, six, and seven lines are to be found, exhibiting much variety of line-structure and rhyme-arrangement. But no one has achieved such distinction as to call for special notice.

Of the eight-line stanza, two varieties must be noticed.

The first is that employed by Chaucer, in his *Monk's Tale*, and elsewhere. *E. g.:*

Although that Nero were as vicious	(a)
As any feend that lyth in helle adoun,	(b)
Yet he, as telleth us Swetonius,	(a)
This wydë world hadde in subjeccioun,	(b)
Both Est and West, South and Septemtrioun ;	(b)
Of rubies, saphires, and of perlës whytë	(c)
Were all his clothës brouded up and down ;	(b)
For he in gemmës gretly gan delytë.	(c)

In the above the *ë* is to be pronounced as a syllable ; *vici^ˈous* is a trisyllable, and *sub^ˈjecc^ˈioun* has four syllables. The rhymes are marked by the letters *a, b, c*.

The second is the *ottava rima*, introduced into England from Italy in the times of Henry VIII., and used by Wyatt and Surrey, Sidney, Spenser, Chatterton, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Longfellow, and others. Byron's *Beppo*, *Vision of Judgment*, and *Don Juan* are written in *ottava rima*. *E. g.:*

Nothing so difficult as a beginning	(a)
In poesy, unless perhaps the end ;	(b)
For oftentimes when Pegasus seems winning	(a)
The race, he sprains a wing, and down we tend,	(b)
Like Lucifer when hurl'd from heaven for sinning ;	(a)
Our sin the same, and hard as his to mend,	(b)
Being pride, which leads the mind to soar too far,	(c)
Till our own weakness shows us what we are.	(c)

Don Juan, iv. 1.

The *Spenserian Stanza*, so called because first used in the *Faery Queen*, is the eight-line stanza of the *Monk's Tale*, with a ninth line of six feet (Alexandrine). This addition gives to the stanza a peculiar stateliness. *E. g.:*

The Lyon would not leave her desolate,	(a)
But with her went along, as a strong gard	(b)
Of her chast person, and a faythfull mate	(a)
Of her sad troubles and misfortunes hard :	(b)
Still, when she slept, he kept both watch and ward ;	(b)
And, when she wakt, he wayted diligent,	(c)
With humble service to her will prepar'd :	(b)
From her fayre eyes he tooke commandement,	(c)
And ever by her looks conceiv'd her intent.	(c)

Faery Queen, i. 3, ix.

Among the chief followers of Spenser in the use of this stanza are Thomson, in *The Castle of Indolence*; Scott, in *Don Roderick*; Burns, in *The Cotter's Saturday Night*; Byron, in *Childe Harold*; Shelley, in *Adonais* and *The Revolt of Islam*; Tennyson, in *The Lotos Eaters*.

187. *Stanzas without Rhyme*.—These are rare in English, inasmuch as rhyme is usually considered one of the three elements that constitute a stanza. But there are some examples of unrhymed stanza. The most conspicuous is Tennyson's so-called *isometric song*, i. e., song-stanzas introduced in the body of the narrative and composed in the metre of the narrative (blank verse).* Thus, "Tears, idle tears," in *The Princess*, iv. 21-40, is a song in four stanzas, each of five blank-verse lines. The Swallow Song, iv. 75-98, is in eight stanzas, each of three lines. See also *The Princess*, vii. 161-174, and "Oh! who would fight and march and countermarch," and "Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, sleep and dream of me," in *Audley Court*. These songs in *The Princess* and *Audley Court* have a marked lyric flow. The song of Enid and the song of the little maid in *Guinevere* are in triplets, but with a peculiar rhyming system.

Longfellow's *To an Old Danish Song-Book* and Tegnér's *Drapa* are in rhymeless stanzas; also, Gudrida's Prophecy in Lowell's *The Voyage to Vinland*. These are doubtless in imitation of Icelandic metres.

* Stedman, *Victorian Poets*, p. 218.

188. The Sonnet.—This is the best place for discussing it; but we must bear in mind that it is not a stanza, in the true sense, but a complete short poem of a peculiar structure.

Without going into the somewhat obscure history of the sonnet, we may say that it was perfected in Italy in the fourteenth century, chiefly by Petrarch, and introduced in England in the reign of Henry VIII.

The strict Italian sonnet of the Petrarchian type is a poem of fourteen iambic pentameter lines, arranged in two quatrains and a sestet. The best rhyme-arrangement is *a b b a; a b b a; c d e c d e*. But in the sestet the rhyme-arrangement is free, subject to the restriction that the thirteenth and fourteenth lines should not be a rhyming couplet, as *cd cd ee*.

Not infrequently the sonnet is described as consisting of an octave and a sestet. But it is better to regard the first portion as consisting of two quatrains. For, in the most finished specimens, the first quatrain states a thought or feeling, the second states the counterpart of that thought or feeling, or some modification of it; while the sestet states the conclusion. Hence the Italian rule, that the meaning should pause at the end of each quatrain. Occasionally, even in Petrarch, the meaning is carried over from the first quatrain to the second. But no such transition is permissible from the second quatrain to the sestet.

English poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries do not conform to the strict sonnet-type. Their rhymes are not always in the Italian order; the meaning is sometimes carried over from quatrain to quatrain, and even from quatrain to sestet. A rhyming couplet at the end is common. In short, the sonnet is treated merely as a poem of fourteen iambic pentameter lines with five rhyme-sounds.

It does not follow from such disregard of strict form that the sonnets of this period are to be rated low. On

the contrary, the sonnets of Sidney, Shakespeare, and Milton are among our choicest treasures. *E. g.:*

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
 I summon up remembrance of things past,
 I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
 And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
 Then can I drown an eye, unus'd to flow,
 For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
 And weep afresh love's long-since cancelled woe,
 And moan th' expense of many a vanish'd sight:
 Then can I grieve at grievances fore-gone,
 And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
 The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
 Which I new pay, as if not paid before:
 But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
 All losses are restor'd and sorrows end.

SHAKESPEARE: *Sonnet xxx.*

In the above, besides the irregularity of the rhyme-order, and the final couplet, there is one continuous thought throughout twelve lines, namely, regret for past losses.

In Milton's famous sonnet, *On His Blindness*, from which a passage has been quoted in § 164, the meaning is carried over without pause from quatrain to quatrain, and from quatrain to sestet. The following, by Matthew Arnold, conforms to the strict Italian model. It is also printed in the Italian manner, *i. e.*, in four stanzas:

Crouch'd on the pavement, close by Belgrave Square,
 A tramp I saw, ill, moody, and tongue-tied.
 A babe was in her arms, and at her side
 A girl; their clothes were rags, their feet were bare.

Some labouring men, whose work lay somewhere there,
 Pass'd opposite; she touch'd her girl, who hied
 Across and begg'd, and came back satisfied.
 The rich she had let pass with frozen stare.

Thought I: "Above her state this spirit towers;
 She will not ask of aliens, but of friends,
 Of sharers in a common human fate.

"She turns from that cold succour, which attends
The unknown little from the unknown great,
And points us to a better time than ours."

4. RHYME.

189. Rhyme* is that similarity of sound which is, in modern poetry, a means of marking the line-endings.

There are three classes: Single (sometimes called Masculine, or Strong); Double (sometimes called Feminine, or Weak); and Trisyllabic.

In *Single Rhyme* the last accented vowel in the rhyming words must be the same; also, if the vowel is not the final sound, the consonant or consonants which follow it. *E. g.:*

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye.

TENNYSON: *The Lady of Shalott*.

On King Olaf's bridal night
Shines the moon with tender light.

LONGFELLOW: *Saga of King Olaf*, viii.

Blind Bartimeus at the gates
Of Jericho in darkness waits.

LONGFELLOW: *Blind Bartimeus*.

When the consonant *before* the accented vowel is also the same, the rhyme is called *identical*; in French, *rime riche*. *E. g.:*

Ye woot your forward,† and I it you recorde.
If even-song and morwe-song accorde, etc.

CHAUCER: *Prologue to C. T.*, 829.

Now both himself and me he wrongs,
The man who thus complains!
I live and sing my idle songs
Upon these happy plains.

WORDSWORTH: *The Fountain*.

* The spelling *rhyme* is retained, in deference to custom; but the true etymological spelling, it may be observed, is *rime*.

† You know your covenant.

Double Rhyme may be described as a single rhyme followed by an unaccented syllable. *E. g. :*

It is a place where poets crowned may feel the heart's decaying,
It is a place where happy saints may weep amid their praying :
Yet let the grief and humbleness as low as silence languish !
Earth surely now may give her calm to whom she gave her anguish.

MRS. BROWNING : *Cowper's Grave*.

Trisyllabic Rhymes are frequent in Hood's *Bridge of Sighs*. *E. g. :*

One more Unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death !
Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care,
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young and so fair !

Not infrequently, especially in lyric verse of four iambic feet, we find the two sections of the same line coupled by rhyme. *E. g. :*

I wind about, and in and out.

TENNYSON : *The Brook*.

And ice mast-high came floating by.

COLERIDGE : *The Ancient Mariner*, 53.

Such rhymes are called middle or sectional rhymes.

190. Imperfect Rhyme. When the terminal sounds upon which the rhyme is based are not identical in the two words, the rhyme is called imperfect. *E. g. :*

In this still place, where murmurs on
But one meek streamlet, only one.

WORDSWORTH : *Glen-Almain*.

He has his Winter too, of pale misfeature,
Or else he would forego his mortal nature.

KEATS : *The Human Seasons* (Sonnet).

Equally imperfect rhymes are to be noted occasionally in the verses of our best poets. Thus we find *light : wit*,

good : *blood*, *care* : *war*, and the like. Some of these may perhaps be explained historically, as survivals of an earlier pronunciation. There must have been a time when *good* and *blood* had the same vowel sound *ū* (from the Anglo-Saxon *ō*), when *car*, *care*, and *war* had the same *ǣ* sound. Burns's *startle* : *mortal* is perhaps a Scotticism; also his *censure* : *answer*, *i. e.* *censure* may be *censer* in Scottish. But no such excuse can be found for Coleridge's *clasping* : *aspen*, or Longfellow's *abroad* : *accord*. Even Wordsworth rhymes *doors* : *wooers*. In Westmoreland *doors* is undoubtedly pronounced *dūrs*; but scarcely *dū-ers*, dissyllabic. Mrs. Browning, however, is the worst offender in this direction; a collection of her transgressions would fill a page or two. Robert Browning rhymes *was* : *glass*, *Abt Vogler*, 3.

The rhyming of a syllable having a strongly-marked final *ē* sound with one having a light *-y* sound, and even the rhyming of a final *ī* sound with *-y*, is not regarded as an imperfection, but is indulged in by nearly all poets; *e. g.*, Milton's *ecstasies* : *eyes* (§ 192), and the following:

Many a green isle needs must be
In the deep wide sea of Misery.

Ay, many flowering islands lie
In the waters of wide Agony.

SHELLEY : *Euganean Hills*.

In humorous poetry imperfect rhymes, single, double, and trisyllabic, are not only tolerated, but are even encouraged. The grotesqueness of sound heightens the grotesqueness of thought. Many pages might be filled with absurd rhymes from *Hudibras*, *The Ingoldsby Legends*, Byron's *Don Juan*, Lowell's *The Biglow Papers*, and similar humorous pieces. One example will suffice:

And when fresh gypsies have paid us a visit, I've
Noticed the couple were never inquisitive.

BROWNING : *The Flight of the Duchess*, 815.

191. *Assonance* is a feature of verse in some of the Romance languages (Spanish, Provençal, etc.) ; but, although employed to a moderate extent in Early English, it has disappeared from our modern poetry. In assonance the vowel sound is the same in the two words, but the following consonant sounds differ. Thus, *fleet : weep, gate : take* are examples of assonance. George Eliot has attempted to imitate Spanish assonance in Juan's song, in *The Spanish Gypsy* :

Maiden, crowned with glossy blackness,
Lithe as panther forest-roaming,
Long-armed naiad, when she dances,
On a stream of ether floating.

Blackness and *dances*, *roaming* and *floating* are supposed to be in assonance. But the attempt cannot be called successful.

Alliteration, indigenous to all Teutonic poetry, was at one time the characteristic feature of English verse. It did not, like rhyme, mark the line-endings, but marked the sequence of feet.

To give a clear and accurate understanding of alliterative verse is scarcely possible, without entering into a discussion of the English language in its early state. Only one or two general features can be mentioned here.

The early English (Anglo-Saxon) line was divided into two sections, equal or very nearly so. Each section consisted of two feet, each foot having one accented syllable and usually one or more unaccented. The two sections were coupled by means of alliteration, *i. e.*, at least two accented syllables, one in each section, had the same initial sound, vowel or consonant. There was no terminal rhyme, until comparatively late.

In consequence of the growing popularity of the rhyming Latin poetry of the Church, this alliterative system began to give way even before the Norman Conquest. After the Conquest the decay was rapid, until in the

thirteenth century the victory of rhyme was assured. There was a temporary revival of the old alliteration, however, in the fourteenth century, notably in the long allegorical poem known as *The Vision of Piers the Plowman*. Since the fourteenth century it has been extinct, although we find an occasional alliterative touch even in modern verse; *e. g.*:

They wept and wail'd, but led the way.

TENNYSON: *In Memoriam*, ciii.

The leaves along the limpid streams of Eden.

BYRON: *Cain*, ii. 1, 103.

Such alliterative touches, however, are merely casual ornaments in a line that is perfectly metrical without them.

The old alliterative habit survives also in such expressions as "bed and board," "to have and to hold," "my heart and hand," book-titles like "Salad for the Solitary," "Red as a Rose," etc.

5. CONTINUOUS VERSE.

Under this heading are treated certain forms of verse which are especially suitable for longer poems, in particular for the Epic and the Drama. The forms are the Octosyllabic Verse, the Heroic Verse, the Alexandrine, the Hexameter, and Blank Verse.

192. Octosyllabic.—This is often called Short Couplet. As a technical term, octosyllabic designates iambic tetrameter, the lines rhyming in pairs. The verse was a favorite in medieval English poetry; it has been used by Chaucer in his *House of Fame*, and by many great poets since. In Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* most of the lines are octosyllabic; but a good many are short of the initial unstressed syllable, and therefore have a trochaic rather than an iambic movement. Occasionally there is a line of five feet, occasionally one of only three. In the

following quotation the second line illustrates the trochaic movement:

There let the pealing organ blow
To the full-voic'd quire below *
In service high and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.

Il Penseroso, 161-166.

Scott's romances, *e. g.*, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Marmion*, *The Lady of the Lake*, *Rokeby*, are in octosyllabics, but with many irregularities. So also Byron's *Giaour*, *The Bride of Abydos*, *The Siege of Corinth*, *Parisina*, *Mazeppa*, and *The Prisoner of Chillon*, Longfellow's *The Building of the Ship*, and numerous poems by other authors. In Scott, Byron, and Longfellow we find a good many rhymes in the order *a b a b*, sometimes even *a b b a*, instead of the normal *a a, b b*.

Longfellow's *Hiawatha* is composed in verses of eight syllables, *e. g.*:

Out of childhood into manhood
Now had grown my Hiawatha,
Skilled in all the craft of hunters,
Learned in all the lore of old men.—Canto iv.

but the metre (see § 171) is not technically the English octosyllabic; the lines are without rhyme, and the movement is uniformly trochaic.

193. Heroic Verse.—This is sometimes called Long Couplet. It consists of iambic lines of five feet, the lines rhyming in pairs. It was used by Chaucer in the *Legend of Good Women*, in the *Prologue* to the *Canterbury Tales*, in the *Knight's Tale* and the *Nun Priest's Tale*; by Spenser in his *Mother Hubbard's Tale*; by Joseph Hall in his *Satires*. After the Restoration it became the favorite English metre,

* *Quire* is Milton's spelling of *choir*.

being developed to its utmost capacity by Dryden, and subsequently by Pope and other poets of the eighteenth century. In the present century it has been used by Byron in *The Corsair*, *Lara*, *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, by Shelley in his *Epipsychidion*, occasionally by Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats, and by Browning in his *Sordello*.

There are two varieties of heroic verse: the strict, and the free. In the strict, the meaning pauses at the end of the rhyme, and is not allowed to run over into the third line, or beyond.* This is the form of verse cultivated by Dryden, Pope, and their immediate predecessors and successors. But Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, and in general the nineteenth century poets, favor the other form, in which the poet is free to run the meaning over and to pause where he sees fit.

A comparison of Pope and Keats will make the difference clear. Pope is satirizing the poetasters of his day:

"Shut, shut the door, good John!" † fatigued I said,
 "Tie up the knocker, say I'm sick, I'm dead."
 The Dog-star rages! nay, 'tis past a doubt,
 All Bedlam, or Parnassus, is let out:
 Fire in each eye, and papers in each hand,
 They rave, recite, and madden round the land.

Epistle to Arbuthnot, 1-6.

The satire of Keats is aimed at the Dryden-Pope school for their slavish observance of strict rules. It is interesting to note how Keats, using the long couplet, constructs it in avowed defiance of such rules:

Beauty was awake!
 Why were ye not awake? But ye were dead
 To things ye knew not of,—were closely wed
 To musty laws lined out with wretched rule
 And compass vile; so that ye taught a school

* Running over is technically called *enjambement*, "striding."

† John Serle, Pope's faithful servant.

Of dolts to smooth, inlay, and clip, and fit,
Till, like the certain wands of Jacob's wit,
Their verses tallied.*

Sleep and Poetry, 192-199.

194. Alexandrine.†—This consists of iambic lines of six feet, the lines rhyming in pairs. It enjoyed a measure of popularity in medieval English, but was not taken up by the great Elizabethan and Stuart poets. In the nineteenth century it has become almost extinct. Wordsworth employs it in *The Pet Lamb*; but the only long poem in which it is employed is Browning's *Fifine at the Fair*, e. g.:

If hunger, proverbs say, allures the wolf from wood,
Much more the bird must dare a dash at something good.

Section ix.

The ninth line of the Spenserian stanza is an Alexandrine (see § 186). We find also an occasional six-foot line in heroic verse, rhyming with one of five feet.

In French poetry, it may be observed, the Alexandrine is the favorite metre, used—to the exclusion of all others—in the so-called classic drama and in narrative, didactic, and satiric poetry.

195. Hexameter.—Any line of six feet may be called hexameter, and in fact the French frequently apply the term to their Alexandrine. But in English the term is restricted to the Greek and Latin dactylic hexameter, a verse composed of dactyls and spondees, and to the modern imitations of it.

The hexameter is without rhyme. The following is a specimen:

Into the open air John Alden, perplexed and bewildered,
Rushed like a man insane, and wandered alone by the seaside;

* Gosse, *From Shakespeare to Pope*. New York; Dodd, Mead & Co., 1885, p. 5.

† The origin of the name is in dispute. Some say that it was formed from Alexandre Paris, the name of an old French poet who used the metre; others derive it from the fact that several poems on Alexander the Great (see § 172) were composed in the metre.

Paced up and down the sands, and bared his head to the east-wind,
Cooling his heated brow, and the fire and fever within him.

LONGFELLOW: *Courtship of Miles Standish*, iv.

The metre is familiar to every reader of Homer and Virgil, or of Longfellow's *Evangeline* and *The Courtship of Miles Standish*. Some of the Elizabethan poets composed short poems in hexameter. In our day, in addition to Longfellow, may be mentioned Charles Kingsley's *Andromeda*, Clough's *Bothie of Toper-na-Fuosich*, and various English translations of Homer and of Goethe's *Hermann und Dorothea*. But in general the metre cannot be said to have met with unquestioned success. It has no genuine spondees; and even the dactyls have not that peculiar tripping movement which we observe in Virgil and still more evidently in Homer. Thus, in "wandered alone by the seaside," *lone by the* is painfully slow and heavy by the side of Virgil's *tegmînē | fāgī* and Homer's *φαίδιμος | Ἐκτωρ*.

Elegiac Metre consists of hexameters alternating with dactylic pentameters, i. e., lines in two sections, each of two and a half feet. *E. g.*:

In the hex|ameter | rises the | fountain's | silvery | column,
In the pen|tameter | aye || falling in | melody | back.

COLERIDGE: *Translation from Schiller*.

Clough, Tennyson, Swinburne, and others have written occasional elegiacs; but the verse remains an exotic.

196. Blank Verse.—Any verse without rhyme, *e. g.*, Longfellow's *Hiawatha* (§ 192), might be called blank. But the term is applied in English exclusively to the unrhymed iambic pentameter.

Blank verse is the English metre by eminence. Although not of native origin, but introduced from Italy by Surrey, early in the sixteenth century, it grew rapidly in favor. First put upon the private stage by Sackville and Norton, in the play of *Gorboduc*, 1561, and upon the public stage by Marlowe in his *Tamburlaine*, about 1587,

it became the acknowledged metre of the English drama. After the decline of the drama it reappeared, with fresh vigor, in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*. During the Dryden-Pope era it was eclipsed, but only partially eclipsed, by heroic verse. It was employed even by Dryden himself in his *All for Love* and *Don Sebastian*, by Otway in his *Venice Preserved*, in Addison's *Cato*, Johnson's *Irene*, Akenside's *Pleasures of the Imagination*, Thomson's *Seasons*, and Young's *Night Thoughts*, to mention only the more prominent poems.

Under the example and teaching of Wordsworth and Coleridge blank verse has been raised to its former supremacy. With it are identified the name and fame of nearly every great poet of this century.

197. The underlying formula of blank verse is simple: five feet with the accentuation $\times \text{ '}$. A line from Tennyson will illustrate:

Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds.

Morte D'Arthur.

But it is evident that a succession of such lines would be monotonous. To prevent monotony, various devices are employed, the principal of which are the following, 1-7:

1. The so-called *Choriambus*, § 181. *E. g.:*

Then, while I breath'd in sight of haven, he
Poor fellow, could he help it? recommenced.

TENNYSON: *The Brook.*

The first line is to be scanned:

Then, | while I breath'd | in sight | of ha|ven, he

2. *Hovering Accent*, *i. e.*, the voice rests upon both syllables of a foot, making both prominent. *E. g.:*

Five years have passed; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear.

WORDSWORTH: *Tintern Abbey.*

In the first line we cannot scan *fíve* *yéars*, nor *fíve* *yéars*,

but must read *five~years*; in the same way, *five~summers*. In the second line, *long~winters*. Observe also, in the second line, how the increased length and weight of *long~win-*compensates for the lightness of the succeeding feet *-ters* and *again* (see § 182).

198. 3. *Cæsura*,* or cutting; the line is cut, or broken, by an unmistakable pause in the meaning. The *cæsura* may come anywhere in the line; the poet shows his skill by shifting its position. Thus:

'Tis much he dares,
And, || to † that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom || that doth guide his valour.

Macbeth, iii. 1, 51.

Seasons return; || but not to me returns
Day, || or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn.

Paradise Lost, iii. 42.

Friend, || there's a certain sorry little scrub
Goes up and down our Florence, || none cares how,
Who, || were he set to plan and execute
As you are, || pricked on by your popes and kings, etc.

BROWNING: *Andrea del Sarto*.

Elaine, || the lily maid of Astolat.

TENNYSON: *Elaine*.

And loved him || with that love which was her doom.

TENNYSON: *Elaine*.

And ever push'd Sir Modred, || league by league.

TENNYSON: *The Passing of Arthur*.

Then spake the bold Sir Bedivere: || "My King."

TENNYSON: *The Passing of Arthur*.

* The *cæsura* is by no means confined to blank verse. It is found in octosyllabics, e. g., "In service high || and anthems clear," § 192; "They wept and wail'd || but led the way," § 191. In lines of eight, seven, and six feet the normal place of the *cæsura* is at the middle of the line; see the quotations from Mrs. Browning's *Lady Geraldine's Courtship*, Byron's *Youth and Age*, Tennyson's *Locksley Hall*, § 183. For a very free use of the *cæsura* in heroic verse, see quotation from Keats, § 193.

† To means here *in addition to*.

Or pilot, || from amidst the Cyclades
 Delos or Samos first appearing, || kens
 A cloudy spot.

Paradise Lost, v. 265.

Frequently there are two cæsuras in the line, *e. g.* :

Then, || while I breath'd in sight of haven, || he,
 Poor fellow, || could he help it? || recommenced.

TENNYSON: *The Brook*.

Lie there, my art. || Wipe thou thine eyes; || have comfort.
Tempest, i. 2, 25.

199. 4. *Two unaccented syllables in the foot* (see § 181):

With garrulous ease and oily courtesies.

TENNYSON: *The Princess*, i. 162.

I often am much wearier than you think,
 This evening more than usual; and it seems
 As if, etc.

BROWNING: *Andrea del Sarto*.

I do forgive thee,
 Unnatural though thou art.
Tempest, v. 1, 79.

The extra syllable is most effective when it occurs in connection with the cæsura, *e. g.* :

How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false.
Merchant of Venice, iii. 2, 83.

All three of them are desperate: their great guilt.
Tempest, iii. 3, 104.

5. *Omission of an unaccented syllable* (see § 182). This occurs nearly always in connection with the cæsura, *e. g.* :

'Gainst my | capti|vity. || Hail, | brave friend!
Macbeth, i. 2, 5.

Come, ~ come; | let's see | him out | at gates; || come.
Coriolanus, iii. 3, 142.

Sometimes we find even the accented syllable omitted, e. g. :

I'll watch | as long | for you | then. || Approach.
Merchant of Venice, ii. 6, 24.

Such omissions, seldom if ever found in narrative blank verse, are quite explicable on the stage, where their place is supplied by some gesture or intonation of the voice.

Less easy to account for is the omission of the unaccented syllable at the beginning of the line, *e. g.* :

Out, | you rogue ! | yon pluck | my foot | awry.

The Taming of the Shrew, iv. 1, 150.

Pray, | good shep|herd, what | fair swain | is this?

The Winter's Tale, iv. 4, 166.

The movement is changed from iambic to trochaic.

6. *Extra unaccented syllable at the end of the line.* This is not uncommon in dramatic blank verse, *e. g.* :

But music for the time doth change his nature.

Merchant of Venice, v. 1, 82.

And burn in many places ; on the topmast,
The yards and bowsprit, would I flame distinctly.

The Tempest, i. 2, 199.

but is rare in narrative. *E. g.* :

Sends from its woods of muskrose twin'd with jasmine.

SHELLEY: *Alastor*.

200. 7. *Light and weak endings.* The line-end is said to be light when the final metrical accent falls upon a word which can bear it only partially. Such words are *am, are ; do, does ; I, they, thou*, etc. The ending is weak when the final accent falls upon a word which cannot bear it at all. Such words are *and, for, if, in, to*, etc.

The effect of a light or a weak ending is to run the elocution over to the next line ; hence such verse is technically called *run-on* verse. Whereas verse in which the voice can pause at the line-end is called *end-stopt*. The distinction is important in the study of the Elizabethan drama. According as the percentage of *run-on* lines in a given drama is small or large, the drama is considered to belong to the early or the late period. In fact, the distinction has been used for determining the relative age of a Shakespearean play, when external evidence of age is

wanting. The following passages illustrate the difference between end-stopt and run-on verse :

A league from Epidamnum had we sail'd,
Before the always wind-obeying deep
Gave any tragic instance of our harm :
But longer did we not retain much hope ;
For what obscured light the heavens did grant
Did but convey unto our fearful minds
A doubtful warrant of immediate death.

Comedy of Errors, i. 1, 63-69.

These three have robb'd me ; and this demi-devil—
For he's a bastard one—had plotted with them
To take my life. Two of these fellows you
Must know and own ; this thing of darkness I
Acknowledge mine.

The Tempest, v. 1, 272-277.

One grave shall be for both ; upon them shall
The causes of their death appear, unto
Our shame perpetual ; once a day I'll visit
The chapel where they lie ; and tears shed there
Shall be my recreation.

The Winter's Tale, iii. 2, 237-241.

The contrast between Shakespeare's earlier and later manner is palpable. The lines from the *Comedy of Errors* are almost sing-song in their cadence. In *The Tempest* note the superfluous syllable in *devil, with them*, the light endings *you, I* ; in *The Winter's Tale*, the superfluous syllable in *visit*, the light ending *shall*, and the weak ending *unto*. And in both the later plays note the shifting of the cæsure.

The combined effect of superfluous end-syllable, shifting cæsure, and light-weak ending was to give to the later dramatic verse a remarkable fluidity. The sense flows on in long stretches, running through line after line, in apparent disregard of line-beginning or line-ending.

Milton accomplishes a somewhat similar effect by means of his hovering accents, cæsural pauses, and choriambics, without weak endings. But Milton's verse,

although highly diversified and harmonious, is far from having the fluidity, the nimbleness, of the verse of Shakespeare and some of Shakespeare's successors. And the same may be said of the blank verse of Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Browning. The only nineteenth century poet who has attempted the frequent use of light-weak endings is Byron, especially in his *Cain*.

8. In reading Elizabethan blank verse we are to remember that the accent and pronunciation of those days differed somewhat from our own. *E. g.*, words like *complexion* might be, and were sometimes, pronounced *comple^xlex^{ion}*, etc.; on the other hand, *innocence* might be slurred into *inn'cence*, as in Middleton's line:

As wild and merry as the heart of innocence.

Speculative and *medicine* were slurred into *speclative* and *medcine*. *Candlestick* might be pronounced as *canstick*, *ignominy* as *ignomy*: *spirit* and *sprite* were equivalents, also *whether* and *wh'e'r*.

It is not possible to mention here all the peculiarities of Elizabethan pronunciation. The careful reader will overcome most of them with a little ingenuity. The fullest treatment accessible to the general student is that in the section entitled *Prosody*, in E. A. Abbott's *Shakespearean Grammar*; Macmillan & Co.

201. *Terza Rima*.—This peculiar Italian metre, employed occasionally by a few of the Elizabethan poets, has been made somewhat prominent in the nineteenth century by students of Italian poetry, especially in their translations of Dante. Byron's *Prophecy of Dante* is written in *terza rima*, so are Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind*, *The Triumph of Life*, *Prince Athanase*, and *The Woodman and the Nightingale*.* Among the translations of Dante may be mentioned those by C. B. Cayley and Mrs. Ramsay.

* The metre of Byron and Shelley is irregular, in comparison with that of Dante.

The line is iambic pentameter, but (in Italian) always ending in an eleventh unaccented syllable. The lines are in stanzas of three. The rhymes are arranged in the formula *a b a; b c b; c d c*, etc. The meaning comes to a stop, usually a full stop, with every stanza, while the rhyme is carried over to the following stanza. Every reader, even though he be wholly unfamiliar with Italian, can perceive these features in the following extract, the opening of Canto iii. of the *Inferno*, the inscription on the gate of Hell:

Per me si va nella città dolente,
 Per me si va nell' eterno dolore,
 Per me si va tra la perduta gente.
 Giustizia mosse il mio alto Fattore,
 Fecemi la divina Potestate,
 La somma Sapienza e il primo Amore.
 Dinanzi a me non fur cose create,
 Se non eterne, ed io eterno duro:
 Lasciate ogni speranza voi ch' entrate.

Note the rhymes *dolente, gente; dolore, Fattore, Amore; Potestate, create, entrate*, with the extra unaccented syllable at the end. Also note the full stop after *gente, Amore, entrate*.

In Mrs. Ramsay's translation the above reads:

Through me ye pass the mournful city's door,
 Through me ye go to never-ending woe,
 Through me are with the lost for evermore.
 By justice moved, my Maker willed it so,
 When I was formed by the Supreme Mind,
 From whom all love, and power, and wisdom flow.
 Before me, no created thing ye find,
 If not eternal; ever I endure:
 O ye who enter here leave hope behind.

The best English *terza rima*, whether original verse or translation, is far below the Italian. This inferiority is mainly due to the inability of our language to yield a continuous supply of double rhymes. The fluidity of Dante's verse, its lilt, due to this extra-syllabic overflow,

is equalled only by its sustained dignity. We must also remember that the *terza rima*, although a three-line stanza, does not produce the effect of stanza measure upon the ear; its effect is that of continuous verse. This is due to the carrying-over of the rhyme.

6. IRREGULAR RHYTHMS.

202. Occasionally the reader of modern literature meets with poems, usually short lyrics, which he is unable to fit into any regular metre, whether iambic or trochaic, anapaestic or dactylic. Such poems are best treated as rhythmical, rather than metrical. Looked at from the historical point of view, they are doubtless a product of the folk-spirit, a survival of the transition-period when the Anglo-Saxon alliterative verse, with its four beats to the line, was giving way before the metrical verse borrowed or imitated from Latin, French, or Italian. James VI. of Scotland named the rhythm *tumbling verse*.

These rhythmical lines have usually four beats, *i. e.*, four strongly-accented syllables, to the line; but sometimes there are only three beats. The four-beat line has a strongly-marked cæsure. *E. g.* :

My ragged rontes all shiver and shake,
As doen high Towers in an earthquake :
They wont in the wind wagge their wrigle tayles,
Perk as a Peacock; but now it auales.*

SPENSER: *Shepherd's Calendar*, February.

Note the alliteration in the above; also in the following ballad :

Wandering thus wearilye, all alone, up and downe,
With a rude miller he mett at the last :
Asking the ready way unto fair Nottingham;
Sir, quoth the miller, I meane not to jest,
Yet I thinke, what I thinke, sooth for to say,
You do not lightlye ride out of your way.

The King and the Miller of Mansfield.

* *Rontes*, young bullocks; *it auales*, it droops, declines.

Nearly all the folk-ballads are to be read in this way, *i. e.*, rhythmically; but frequently, perhaps usually, the even-numbered lines have three beats instead of four.

In drinking songs, also, rhythm is common, its freedom and sharp accentuation being favorable to conviviality. Thus the *Soldier's Song* in *The Lady of the Lake*, vi., is rhythmical, especially toward the end of each stanza. Also this Cambridge song of the seventeenth century:

Come hither Apollo's bouncing girl,
 And in a whole Hippocrene of sherry,
 Let's drink a round, till our brains do whirl,
 Tuning our pipes to make ourselves merry;
 A Cambridge lass, Venus-like, born of the froth
 Of an old half-filled jug of barley-broth,
 She, she is my mistress, her suitors are many,
 But she'll have a square-cap, if e'er she have any.
CLEVELAND: *Square-Cap*.*

We meet with rhythmic movement even in modern poetry of a higher order, *e. g.*, Browning's *Flight of the Duchess*, Longfellow's *Curfew* (two beats to the line), Tennyson's *Merman* and *Mermaid*.

* Square-Cap is student, a reference to the well-known University headgear of England.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ORATORY AND DEBATE.

To treat the subject of oratory adequately would involve an examination of argumentative rhetoric, as set forth in the works of Aristotle and his successors, ancient and modern. In the present chapter nothing can be attempted beyond indicating a few general features, such as will be of practical service to the ordinary student.

ORATORY.

203. The Oration is not a form of writing (see *note* to § 1), but is a form of literature. It is to be defined as a spoken discourse, delivered by a certain person, before a certain audience, upon a certain occasion, for the attainment of a definite object.

An oration may embody all the forms of discourse, *i. e.*, narration, description, exposition, and argument. But the narrative and descriptive passages* will—almost of necessity—be brief, and subordinate to the main object, which is Persuasion. The term persuade is used in a broad sense; the orator exerts himself to induce his hearers to act in a certain way, or to accept his views upon a certain subject, and his chief means to this end are exposition and argument.

There are three varieties of oration: the Legislative (called by the Romans *deliberativus*, by the Greeks *συμ-*

* Highly instructive specimens of narration and description, strictly subordinate to the main object, persuasion, are to be found in Webster's *Defence of the Kennistons* and *The Murder of Captain Joseph White*. In the former, the incidents connected with the alleged robbery are told very effectively. In the latter, the description of the murder-scene is dramatic in its vividness.

βουλευτικός); the Judicial (*forensis*, δικάσιμος); the Demonstrative (*demonstrativus*, ἐπιδεικτικός).

The first two terms almost explain themselves. In a legislative oration, also called a deliberative, the speaker addresses a law-making body, with the object of inducing it to vote for or against a proposed measure. In a judicial, also called forensic, the speaker attacks or defends a certain person, or group of persons, in a trial at law. In demonstrative oratory, the speaker holds up to the audience a certain person, or a certain mode of action, for admiration and imitation. A demonstrative oration is also called a eulogy, or panegyric.

All three kinds are well represented in the speeches of Webster.* *The Defence of the Kennistons*, the *Murder of Captain Joseph White*, and the *Dartmouth College Case* are judicial. *The Reply to Hayne*, *The Constitution not a Compact between Sovereign States*, and the so-called *Saratoga* speech are legislative. The last named, it is true, was not addressed to a law-making body, but to a mass-meeting. Yet its object was to influence legislation indirectly, by creating a strong public opinion in favor of certain measures. *The First Settlement of New England*, the *Bunker Hill Monument*, and the *Eulogy on Mr. Justice Story* are demonstrative.

The oratory of the Christian pulpit is to be classified as demonstrative. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries sermons were, it is true, much more argumentative than at present. The aim of the preacher seemed to be to logically convince his hearers of the truth of Christianity in general, or of the truth of some one doctrine in particular. Such argumentation, however, is best reserved for printed polemical treatises, which can be studied at the reader's leisure. The present practice of pulpit orators is rather to expound the doctrines of the Old and New

* A. J. George, *Select Speeches of Daniel Webster*. Boston; Heath. 1893.

* Testaments, to make clear what the founders of the Mosaic and Christian dispensations really intended, and to hold up their lives for zealous imitation.

204. From the nature itself of an oration may be deduced certain general principles.

1. Being limited to a certain occasion, the oration must be concise. Even where no time-limit is imposed, by law or by custom, the orator cannot afford to weary his hearers' patience.

2. On the other hand, being a spoken discourse, the oration must be, above all things, clear. The hearer, unlike a reader, has not the opportunity of refreshing his recollection of previous statements by turning back to a printed page. Hence it is the speaker's duty to put things in such a way that the hearer cannot possibly forget them.

These two requirements, conciseness and clearness, are to be harmonized only by securing the most perfect structural unity and simplicity.

The rule of unity prescribes that everything not bearing directly upon the issue should be rigorously avoided.

Simplicity is secured by avoiding abrupt transitions from one section of the subject to another and by restricting the discourse to a few fundamental principles and primary sentiments. These principles and sentiments should be stated and re-stated more than once, and should be illustrated and enforced in a great variety of ways. In this respect the orator differs obviously from the writer, for example, from the essayist. The latter, relying upon the reader's ability, not only to meditate at leisure, but to turn back from any page to the preceding pages, may content himself with stating his points one by one, in due order, with very little illustration or enforcement and without any repetition. *May*, be it observed; for, even in the most formal essay, a moderate amount of amplification and recapitulation is desirable. Furthermore, the essayist

is at liberty to indulge in nice discriminations of thought and delicate shades of feeling.*

Behind and above all rules is the personality of the orator. It is this personal element which constitutes the peculiar charm of oratory, and also its mysterious power. The old saying, that the poet is born, not made, is applicable to the orator as well. Or perhaps it would be safer to say that the orator is both born and made. That special gift which we call eloquence is developed, and made practically serviceable, only by dint of persistent self-training. The biography of every orator who has made a lasting mark in the affairs of his people tells pretty much the same tale of patient study and concentration of purpose.

In genuine oratory two features are so prominent as to call for special mention. The one is earnestness, sincerity of conviction, a fervor of belief that imparts itself to the hearer. This is the feature brought out by Webster himself in his exposition of eloquence (quoted in § 58). The other is reserve force. Every great master of utterance, written or spoken, poetry or prose, makes upon his hearers or readers, it is true, the impression of knowing more than he sees fit to tell, of holding himself in reserve for a still greater effort, if need be. But the orator is by eminence the man of reserve force. He seems to create in his hearers a feeling of confidence that he is able to meet any emergency out of his unexpended resources.

205. The aim of the orator is to persuade. But persuasion can scarcely be defined, for the reason that it consists of two processes seemingly incongruous, an intellectual and an emotional. The orator appeals to our understanding with arguments; but he applies these argu-

* In many law-cases the statements of fact and of legal principle are necessarily long and complicated. But the lawyer has two circumstances in his favor: the Court is presumed to be able to follow the most involved train of reasoning; evidence is now reported in short-hand and type-written. In congressional and parliamentary debates upon questions involving elaborate statistics, these latter can be printed.

ments in a manner to awaken our sympathies. To argue without awakening sympathy may be correct reasoning, but is not oratory; to arouse passion and prejudice without resort to argument is demagogism.

Hence, upon questions which are determined by the rules of the mere understanding, we are not to expect oratory, *e. g.*, upon questions of science. Oratory is in place only in human affairs, in so-called "mixed questions," where there are two sides, both of which are plausible, and the comparative merits of which can be tested only by Testimony, Authority, and Analogy (§§ 70-72).

In many law-cases, *e. g.*, suits for the possession of real property, for breaches of commercial contract, and the like, there is no room for an appeal to the feelings, hence there can be no genuine oratory. The lawyer advances merely technical arguments, and submits them practically to the court, *i. e.*, to a man or a body of men supposed to be divested, for this purpose, of all emotion. Yet even in very technical law an emotional appeal is possible. A celebrated instance is Webster's speech in the *Dartmouth College Case*. After going through all the intricacies of the law upon private corporations, he ended with the following peroration, the most remarkable ever delivered in a purely civil suit involving no personal rights:

This, sir, is my case. It is the case, not merely of that humble institution, it is the case of every college in the land. It is more. It is the case of every cleemosynary institution throughout our country—of all those great charities formed by the piety of our ancestors, to alleviate human misery, and scatter blessings along the pathway of life. It is more! It is, in some sense, the case of every man among us who has property, of which he may be stripped, for the question is simply this: Shall our State legislatures be allowed to take that which is not their own, to turn it from its original use, and apply it to such ends or purposes as they in their discretion shall see fit?

Sir, you may destroy this little institution; it is weak; it is in your hands! I know it is one of the lesser lights in the literary horizon of our country. You may put it out. But, if you do so, you must carry

through your work! You must extinguish, one after another, all those greater lights of science, which, for more than a century, have thrown their radiance over our land!

It is, sir, as I have said, a small college, and yet there are those who love it.

At this point, struggling with emotion, his eyes filled with tears, he spoke in broken words for a few minutes of his own connection with Dartmouth. Court and spectators hung upon the words, as if spell-bound. Then, recovering his composure and speaking in his usual deep rich voice, he uttered the final sentence:

Sir, I know not how others may feel [glancing at the opponents of the college before him], but for myself, when I see my Alma Mater surrounded, like Cæsar, in the senate house, by those who are reiterating stab after stab, I would not, for this right hand, have her turn to me, and say, *et tu quoque, mi fili!* And thou too, my son!

206. In oratory special attention should be paid to the introduction (exordium) and the conclusion (peroration); the practical objections mentioned in § 125 do not apply here.

By means of a skilful introduction the orator defines the issue clearly and succinctly, or he creates provisionally some sentiment in favor of his cause. Webster's statement of the issue in the Dartmouth College case is quoted in § 21. The opening paragraph of his *Defence of the Kennistons* is an ingenious enumeration of the circumstances which make the trial a peculiar hardship for his clients. Although quite unobtrusive, the introduction is really a subtle appeal to the compassion of the jury. To be noted is the repetition of the construction, "They have lost," (see § 10).

In the opening paragraph of his reply to Calhoun (*The Constitution not a Compact*), Webster recalls the Senate from the excitement caused by Calhoun's tone of wrath to a more sober and practical frame of mind:

Mr. President,—The gentleman from South Carolina has admonished

us to be mindful of the opinion of those who shall come after us. We must take our chance, Sir, as to the light in which posterity will regard us. I do not decline its judgment, nor withhold myself from its scrutiny. Feeling that I am performing my public duty with singleness of heart and to the best of my ability, I fearlessly trust myself to the country, now and hereafter, and leave both my motives and my character to its decision.

The opening of the *Saratoga* speech is a sketch of the situation, in clear bold lines :

We are, my friends, in the midst of a great movement of the people. That a revolution in public sentiment on some important questions of public policy has begun, and is in progress, it is vain to attempt to conceal, and folly to deny, etc.

The peroration in the Dartmouth College case is quoted in § 205. More generally known is the peroration of the *Reply to Hayne* :

I have not allowed myself, Sir, to look beyond the Union to see what might lie bidden in the dark recess behind.

ending with the memorable outburst :

Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable !

Highly skilful, from the legal point of view, is the summing up in the *Defence of the Kennistons* :

If the jury are satisfied that there is the highest improbability that these persons could have had any previous knowledge of Goodridge, or been concerned in any previous concert to rob him ; if their conduct that evening and the next day was marked by no circumstances of suspicion ; if from that moment until their arrest nothing appeared against them ; if they neither passed money, nor are found to have had money ; if the manner of the search of their house, and the circumstances attending it, excite strong suspicions of unfair and fraudulent practices ; if, in the hour of their utmost peril, no promises of safety could draw from the defendants any confession affecting themselves or others, it will be for the jury to say whether they can pronounce them guilty.

It will be noted that Webster does not end :

it will be for the jury to pronounce them innocent.

That would have been a direction, a charge to the jury ; and Webster was too dexterous a pleader to usurp the

office of judge. He merely affects to ask the jury whether they can, in honor and conscience, really believe the defendants to be guilty. This feigned hesitancy is similar to Burke's (§ 13, first quotation; § 115).

207. Comparatively few students and readers are members of the legal profession, or of any legislative body. The greater number of readers are directly interested only in demonstrative oratory. It is needful, therefore, to say a few words upon this branch in particular.

In demonstrative oratory there is little or no argument. The orator is not trying to prove anything, or to urge his hearers to vote for a certain measure. He is rather trying to interest them in a certain subject and thereby to influence their general conduct.

Hence the substance of the discourse is exposition rather than argument; but it is exposition made persuasive. An admirable specimen is Webster's *Bunker Hill Oration*.

The orator does not prove anything, not even the right of the Colonies to rebel; all such matters are taken for granted. The oration is in the main a contrast between the present and the past, with the lessons to be drawn from the contrast. The past is recalled in its most striking aspects; the survivors of the battle, of the revolutionary army, Warren, and Lafayette are in turn commemorated. The present is next presented, with its outlook of hope, and also with its darker side. The policy of sober self-government in America is contrasted with oppression and frantic rebellion elsewhere.

In conclusion, the orator calls upon his hearers to "indulge an honest exultation" in the conviction of the benefits which the example of the United States is likely to produce. Great privileges impose great obligations. Upon every American rests a two-fold obligation: to augment the material prosperity of the country; to maintain the country in its integrity (see § 158, 4).

Although much more than half a century has passed since the oration was delivered, its lessons are still fresh. No thoughtful person can read Webster's simple lucid exposition of the significance of the occasion and of the event commemorated by it, without feeling his heart profoundly stirred, without feeling a stronger, more definite impulse to serve his country better. This is the persuasion of oratory.

DEBATE.

208. Any discussion in which opposite sides of a question, theoretical or practical, are presented, is called a debate. Thus we speak of debates in Congress, or in Parliament. But in the narrower and more rhetorical sense of the term, a debate is the formal discussion of a proposition in the abstract (see § 63), the proposition being carefully formulated, and the two sides, called the affirmative and the negative, being presented alternately by speakers speaking in a prescribed order. Frequently, perhaps usually, the audience, or a select committee representing the audience, decides by vote that one of the two sides has got the better of the debate.

A debate is, then, a literary exercise of an argumentative and persuasive character. In school and college training it has its value. It teaches the debater to look into questions more closely than he otherwise might, to present his views in an orderly manner, and to meet opposing views. The time of each speech being limited to a certain number of minutes, the debater must acquire the gift of speaking to the point. He must also acquire the gift of self-possession, of detecting any weakness in the opposite side and turning it to account.

In order that a debate may be profitable, it should be fairly stated and the burden of proof determined.

209. Proposition; Burden of Proof.—The burden of proof is really involved in the proposition; as soon as

the latter is properly formulated, the former can be deduced as a matter of course.

In order to formulate the proposition, the student must examine not only § 63, but also the remarks upon Assumption and Presumption in § 69.

In general, a proposition should be drawn up as an assertion in the affirmative, and the wording of it will depend upon the presumption involved.

For example, the best manner of filling the office of judge may be submitted as a subject of debate, whether the judge should be elected, or appointed. How, then, is the proposition to be drawn up and the burden of proof to be determined? Bearing in mind the general truth that there is always a presumption in favor of what is, and against what is not, we can reason thus. Every change is an affirmation which must be sustained. In a state in which the judges are elected, *e. g.*, in New York, the change would consist in substituting appointment for election. Consequently, in New York, the proposition is to be drawn up in this form :

The judges of this state ought to be appointed.

The burden of proof rests naturally with the affirmative. But in a state in which the judges are appointed, the proposition should read :

The judges of this state ought to be elected.

Another example, still clearer, is this. Very recently the manner of choosing United States senators has become a popular question : should they be elected by the people of the respective states in direct vote? Since the Constitution prescribes the present method of election, which can be changed only by means of a constitutional amendment, it is clear that the proposition must be formulated :

A senator ought to be elected by the direct vote of the people of the state.

A statement in alternative form is not a proposition, and therefore is not a proper subject of debate; *e. g.*:

Whether a country life is preferable to a city life.

nor a statement in the form of a question; *e. g.*:

Are the pleasures of hope more beneficial than those of memory?

Thus worded, neither one of the above statements presents a clearly distinguished affirmative and negative side. Hence a debater speaking in favor of a country life, or of the pleasures of hope, would not know whether the burden of proof rested on him or on his opponent.

The question of country life versus city life, or of hope versus memory, is one in which there is no general presumption. Residents of a city, it is true, might prefer their mode of life; on the other hand, farmers might prefer theirs. But such preferences can scarcely be called general presumptions.

Where there is no presumption, the issue can be determined only by agreement. The debaters must agree among themselves that one form or the other shall be presented as the affirmative. Thus:

A country life is preferable to a city life.

or the opposite:

A city life is preferable to a country life.

In trials at law the burden of proof is a complicated matter, involving many technical rules. In ordinary debate, however, the burden of proof amounts practically to this, that those holding the affirmative should advance a certain body of argument which those on the negative are unable to answer. Reversing the statement, we may say that the debaters on the negative are not bound to do anything more than meet the arguments of the affirmative. But since they have the right, and usually avail themselves of it, to advance arguments that are somewhat more than a mere answer, it is the custom, where there are sev-

eral debaters on each side, to let the affirmative have the last word.

210. Definition.—This is all-important in debate. The several terms of the proposition should be clearly understood, and the issue drawn as sharply as possible. Thus, to take the questions discussed in § 209 for illustration, who are included in the term *judges*? All holders of a judicial office, or only those of a certain grade? What is a *country* life? Does it mean the life of a farmer, pure and simple, or may it include life in a small country town? The term *preferable* also would need careful limitation. Has it the sense of being conducive to physical well-being, or to intellectual, or to moral, or to pecuniary?

Too often the subjects of debate are improperly stated. They are not drawn up in the form of an affirmative proposition. And even when in the affirmative, they are worded too concisely. The framers of a debatable proposition are apt to treat it as if it were an axiom, the briefer the better. If a single sentence would be too long and involved, the necessary limitations might be introduced in two or three independent sentences.

In judging the merits of a debate, the audience should be governed solely by what the speakers have said, and not by the question itself. An ideal question would be one so nicely balanced as apparently not to lean to either side. But very few questions are thus ideal. One side has usually some slight preponderance, or appeals to the interests and prejudices of the audience. Those who argue for this side have, therefore, a slight advantage. This the audience should disregard, as far as it can. The question for it to decide is not, which of the two sides of the proposition is in itself the stronger, but which side has been better presented by its advocates. In other words, not the proposition itself is to be judged, but the treatment of it.

CHAPTER XIX.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

THE following sketch is merely an attempt to present the more obvious phenomena and agencies in the growth of our language from the earliest recorded remains down to the present day. For a fuller and more systematic treatment of this interesting subject, the reader is referred to O. F. Emerson, *The History of the English Language*, New York; Macmillan. 1894. The subject is treated from a slightly different point of view in T. R. Lounsbury, *History of the English Language*. Revised ed. New York; Holt. 1894. The works by W. W. Skeat, *Principles of English Etymology*, Oxford; Clarendon Press. First Series, 1887; Second Series, 1891, offer an extremely valuable collection of data. The First Series ("Native Element") is somewhat difficult for any one unversed in technical philological methods. The Second Series ("Foreign Element") is more easily followed by the general reader.

1. BEFORE THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

211. The language known to us by the name of English was not indigenous to the island of England, but was transplanted thither in the fourth and fifth centuries of the Christian era.

When the island was invaded by the Romans under Julius Caesar, 55 B. C., it was occupied by various tribes closely allied in blood and language. These tribes are commonly designated by the generic name of Britains, and their language is called British. The language was one of a family known to philologists as Keltic. Living representatives of the Keltic family are the modern Gaelic of Ireland (and the Scotch Highlands), Welsh, and the Armorican (or Breton) of the French province of Brittany.

Julius Caesar did not make any serious effort to con-

quer the island. The real conquest was begun a century later, 43 A. D., under Claudius, and was practically complete by the end of the first century. During the second, third, and fourth centuries Britain, *i. e.*, that part of the island now known as England proper, was in every sense a Roman military province. But the Highlands of Scotland were never thoroughly Romanized; Wales also was in a large measure independent.

Roman law, Roman civil and military administration, prevailed throughout Britain. But whether the Latin language became a vernacular, or was used only by the Roman officials and their families and immediate dependents, is a point upon which we have not sufficient information.

Early in the fifth century the great Roman empire was threatened at many points on the Continent, and therefore Britain, merely an outlying and comparatively unimportant province, was abandoned.

212. Concerning the coming of the English and their conquest of the island, our knowledge, despite the acutest research of modern times, is still meagre and vague. There are grounds for believing that the English began to gain a foothold along the eastern coast in the latter half of the fourth century. Throughout the fifth century they came in increasing numbers, pushing their conquests up the valleys of the Thames, Trent, Humber, and Tyne. By the year 500 A. D., eastern, central, and southern Britain was in their possession. By the year 600 the whole country, as far north as the Frith of Forth and as far west as Wales and Cornwall, was substantially English.

The native British were either killed in war or reduced to slavery. The British language became extinct.* The Christian church, which had been established as an off-

* According to one theory, the Armorican of Brittany is the lineal descendant of the ancient British, brought thither by refugees from Britain in this period.

shoot of the church in Gaul, was crushed by the conquerors, who were still heathen. The reconversion of the land and people to Christianity was effected in the seventh century, by Keltic missionaries from Ireland and Scotland and by Roman Catholic missionaries from Rome and Franco-Gallia.

213. The new conquerors of Britain were a homogeneous folk, speaking one language, but with dialectic differences. They came from the countries now known as Jutland, Sleswick, Holstein, and the Frisian coast as far south as modern Holland. They are usually divided into three tribes: Jutes, Angles, and Saxons. But the tribal differences among them must have been very slight.

As to the generic name to be given to the language in this period, there is some divergence of usage among scholars. The older school of philologists, represented by Grimm, Grein, Kemble, Thorpe, etc., used the term Anglo-Saxon, as expressive of the leading tribal elements, the Angles and the Saxons (or West Saxons, in distinction from the Saxons on the Continent, east of the lower Rhine). The younger school in the main prefers the term Old English; more precisely, Oldest English. Each term has its advantages. For literary, historical, legal, political discussions, Oldest English is preferable. But in purely linguistic matters the term Anglo-Saxon, although an inelegant hybrid, offers certain advantages.

There were three leading dialects: West-Saxon (or Wessex), Mercian (or Midland), and Northumbrian. The territory of Wessex was for the most part south of the Thames; that of Mercian, between the Thames and the Humber; that of Northumbrian extended from the Humber into the Scottish Lowlands. The differences still survive in the three chief groups of modern English dialects, the Southern, the Midland, and the Northern. Our modern literary English, it may be here observed, is an offshoot of the Mercian-Midland.

214. The written remains of the language before the Norman Conquest are very full. They begin about the year 700, if not earlier. They consist of inscriptions, glossaries, charters (wills and conveyances of land), laws secular and ecclesiastical, poetry (some heathen, see *Beowulf*, § 171, but chiefly Christian), translations of the Gospels and the Heptateuch, translations of historical works, lives of the saints, treatises upon Christian doctrine, medical treatises (according to the crude medieval conception of medical practice), a chronicle of English history, and many other writings too heterogeneous to be readily classified.

From these remains have been determined the grammatical structure of the language, its range of vocabulary, and its relations to other kindred languages.

Oldest English (Anglo-Saxon) is a member of the family of languages called by the philologist Germanic or General Teutonic. In particular, it is a form of Low (or North) German, in distinction from High (or South) German. Its closest affinities are with Frisian (old and modern), with Old Saxon (spoken east of the lower Rhine in the eighth and ninth centuries), and with the modern *Platt-Dütsch*. It is also closely connected with modern Dutch (Holland). Its affinities with Scandinavian speech (Danish, Swedish, etc.), although clearly marked, are less direct.

The student must be on his guard against one misconception, namely, that English is an offshoot of the language which we usually call German. This literary and official German, the language taught in our schools, the language of Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, is High or South German. To speak more accurately, it is Midland German; at any rate, it is not Low German. Whereas English is, in every sense, a form of Low German speech. Speaking figuratively, we might call English and literary German first cousins, perhaps only second cousins. Both

are descended from a remote common ancestor. The most striking feature of High German is its system of "shifted" consonants. Thus: for the *th* sound we find in High German *d*; for *d* we find *t*; for *t* we find *s* or *z* (pronounce *ts*). *E. g.*: English *thou* is German *du*; English *deed* is German *tat*; English *to* is German *zu*. This "shifting" of *th* to *d*, *d* to *t*, *t* to *s*, *z*, took place on the Continent after the fifth century, *i. e.*, after the *Jutes, Angles, and West Saxons* had migrated to England. The English sounds, accordingly, represent the earlier form of General Teutonic pronunciation. It is the High German sounds which are changed.

215. Oldest English, unlike our modern speech, was a distinctively inflectional language, *i. e.*, it marked grammatical relations less by word-order and more by changes in the forms of words. Most of these changes, but not all, were in the nature of syllables of declension and conjugation.

In its noun-declension the language distinguished at least five general classes, also three (grammatical) genders, and four cases. As a specimen of declension we may take the masculine noun *hring*, "ring;" nom. acc. *hring*, gen. *hringes*, dat. *hringe*; pl. nom. acc. *hringas*, gen. *hringa*, dat. *hringum*. Attention is called to the vowels *e*, *a*, *u*, in the declension-syllables.

In conjugation there were two general classes of verbs, the strong and the weak. The strong are sufficiently illustrated by the modern *sing*, *sang*, *sung*; or, in another variety, by *fall*, *fell*, *fallen*. The weak are illustrated by the modern *love*, *loved*, *loved*.

Adjectives were declined as fully as nouns, and with a still greater variety of termination. Our modern speech has completely discarded the adjective declension; but a trace survives in Chaucer's phrase "youre aller cost," where "aller" is the remains of an old genitive plural, = "of all of you," and in Shakespeare's "alderliest," where

"alder" is a corruption of "aller," = "dearest of all;" compare the modern German *allerliebst*.

Even before the Norman Conquest the language was progressing toward simplicity and uniformity. There was a tendency to change final *-m* to *-n* and even to drop the *-n* altogether, to conform feminine nouns and neuters to the masculine declension, to confound *e*, *a*, *o*, *u* in syllables of inflection, and even to reduce all four vowels to an obscure *e* sound.

216. During this period the language was subjected to two foreign influences worthy of note: the one was Latin, the other was Danish.

Not a few Latin words were borrowed, chiefly words used in the doctrine and ritual of the Roman Catholic church,* *e. g.*, *altar*, *creed*, *deacon*, *font*, *pall*, *temple*, *mass*, *minster*, *monk*, *nun*, etc.; also some names of plants and animals, as *pea*, *pear*, *pepper*, *palm*, *capon*, *lobster*, *trout*, etc., and some miscellaneous names, as *copper*, *dish*, *mill*, *pillow*, etc.; even some verbal forms, as *offer*, *spend*, *shrive*, etc.

The borrowings from Danish† comprise nouns, adjectives, and verbs; many of these have become the most familiar words of every-day speech, *e. g.*, *hustings*, *husband*, *knife*, *awe* (see § 228), *wrong*, *to call*, *to crave*, *to take*.

But in the main the language kept itself free from foreign influences and pursued its own course. The homily-writers and translators of the tenth and eleventh centuries, *e. g.*, Aelfric, abbot of Ensham, who lived from

* A few old Roman words, it is believed, were brought by the Angles and Saxons in their migration from the Continent. It is also possible that some ecclesiastical Latin words were borrowed in England from the Keltic Christians (British or Irish, see § 212), rather than from Rome direct. The termination *-caster*, *-chester*, Latin *castra*, in place-names, must be a borrowing from the Roman British.

† The Danes began plundering the shores of England in the ninth century. In the tenth they settled in such numbers along the coast of the eastern counties that this portion of the country was named the *Dane-land*. In the first half of the eleventh century Cnut the Great even styled himself over-lord of England. The laws which he enacted are still extant in an Old English version.

about 955 to about 1025, the most voluminous writer of the period, had no difficulty in expounding the most abstruse points in the Athanasian creed, in the theory of the sacraments, and the like, by means of native terms coined for the purpose. These purely English terms are fully as clear and precise as the Latin terms *unity*, *trinity*, *incarnation*, *procession* (of the Holy Ghost), which later Englishmen have substituted for them.

217. In one respect the language was deficient: there was no literary standard, no literary centre. The earliest literature, it is believed, took its rise in Northumbria; subsequently Mercia was in the ascendancy; still later, Wessex. But neither the language of Northumbria (York, Durham) nor the language of Mercia (Worcester) nor the language of Wessex (Winchester)* was ever acknowledged to be a standard to which *all* educated Englishmen must conform. Had the Normans not effected their conquest in the latter half of the eleventh century, it is at least possible that the language of Wessex would have become in time the standard, and that England would have had in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries a medieval "classic" English literature like that of Middle High German under the Swabian emperors. But the landing of Duke William, in 1066, put an end to all such possibilities.

2. FROM THE NORMAN CONQUEST TO CHAUCER.

218. The direct effects of the Conquest upon the English language have usually been misunderstood and greatly exaggerated. From the ordinary text-books of history and literature one gets the impression that the language became immediately disintegrated and permeated with Norman-French words. But the facts are wholly opposed to such a view. The native language and the French spoken by the Normans, who at no time constituted more

* The Kentish dialect, represented by the venerable and powerful see of Canterbury, was closely akin to Wessex.

than a tenth of the population, kept on side by side for a time without much intermingling. When at last the native language became permeated with French words, the result was due in part to causes quite independent of and later than the Conquest.

The direct effect of the Conquest was this. The leading positions in church and state were occupied by Normans. Natives speaking only English became, of necessity, an inferior class. Some of them might, indeed, attain to the dignity of town bailiff or village priest. But the bulk of the population was illiterate, and the language became, to use a technical term, a "rustic" speech. Grammatical niceties were disregarded. The tendency, already noted in § 215, to reduce *a*, *o*, *u* in termination-syllables to obscure *e*, and even to slough off these termination-syllables altogether, became irresistible. Distinction of (grammatical) gender was dropped, the declension classes were merged in one (with an occasional variety), and the conjugations were simplified and normalized. In less than two centuries the language, still quite free from foreign admixture, had almost ceased to be an inflectional language and had assumed most of the characteristics of our modern speech. Thus the *Ormulum*, written about 1200, in the Midland dialect, differs but slightly from English of to-day in point of grammar. The chief difference is one of vocabulary: in the *Ormulum* many native words are retained which have been supplanted, since 1200, by French or Latin.*

219. Another phenomenon of the period is the multiplicity of dialects. Before the Norman Conquest there were three leading dialects. After the Conquest these three are represented by a variety of sub-dialects, the dividing lines of which are not always clear. This multiplicity resulted from the loss of all centres of literary influence. In the

* There are also not a few Danish words in the *Ormulum*; most of these, too, have passed away.

olden time Canterbury, Winchester, Worcester, York, Durham, perhaps Peterborough, had been at least provincial standards of correct usage. But these towns had declined in influence, and London, which was eventually to become the all-powerful centre of the new English, was only slowly coming to the front. Consequently each petty section spoke its own speech without regard to its neighbors, and each writer wrote in the speech of his section.

Precisely when the preponderance of London began to assert itself, and how it happened that the language of the new London was Midland rather than Southern, these are points upon which we are not fully enlightened. But we shall scarcely err seriously, if we hold that by the year 1300 London English was in the lead.

3. THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES.

220. The exact year of Chaucer's birth is not known. Probably it was 1340, certainly not many years before. By that time the supremacy of London English was unquestioned. The young poet, accordingly, as a Londoner by birth and a follower of the brilliant Court of the Edwards, enjoyed the inestimable advantage of speaking and writing the standard language. Compared with him, other poets of the period, Gower perhaps excepted, seem more or less provincial. Chaucer's language, apart from certain archaisms of pronunciation, has for us five centuries later nothing uncouth.

It was not alone the rare poetic gifts of Chaucer and his contemporaries that made the fourteenth century memorable. The century set the fashion in word-borrowing. Although subsequent centuries have performed greater feats in the way of borrowing, the century of Chaucer and Gower gave to our language its peculiar bent in this direction. French medieval literature was then at the height of its supremacy over Europe. In all branches of art and knowledge French terms were introduced freely, supplant-

ing the native terms. The language became, at least in the color of its vocabulary, Romance rather than Germanic. To test the assertion we need only read from twenty to thirty pages of Chaucer. We shall find the poet's Romance vocabulary quite familiar, seldom requiring definition; whereas the words and phrases which do require definition are nearly always native expressions, still current in the fourteenth century, but now obsolete. Also many Latin words were introduced, either directly, or through the medium of French.

221. The grammatical structure of Chaucer's language is so like our own that the few points of difference may be ignored here. In truth, the language is almost as fresh, as direct and intelligible to us as it was to the Londoner of 1400.

But in one respect, certainly, we must be on our guard. The *pronunciation* of the fourteenth century retained many features which have since been radically changed. To mention them all would not be possible in this place. Only three classes will be briefly touched upon.

1. The long vowels *ī*, *ō*, *ū* were still pronounced as they had been in Oldest English. Namely, *ī* had the sound of our *ee* in *seen*; *ō*, *oo*, had the sound of our *o* in *bone*; *ū* had the sound of our *oo* in *soon*. Put negatively, the *ī* had not been diphthonged into *ai*, the *ū* (often written *ou*) had not been diphthonged into *au*. In fact the complete conversion of *ū* to *au* did not take place before the end of the sixteenth century.

2. The final *-e* was sounded in many places where it is now silent. Thus note: *wyðē*, *perlēs*, *whytē*, *clothēs*, *gemmēs*, *dehytē*, in the Chaucer extract, § 186. This sounding of *e* is indispensable for the scansion of Chaucer's poetry.

3. Many French words retained the Romance accentuation upon the end of the word, *e. g.*, *vicious*, *subjeccioun*, *Septemtrioun*, in § 186.

222. The fifteenth century is less interesting to the

student of literature than the fourteenth; but to the student of language it is fully as important. During this century of political disturbance (the War of the Roses) the language was stripped of its few lingering inflectional syllables and reduced to its present comparatively uninflectional structure. When Henry VII. made himself king, 1485, English grammar was on its present basis. The vocabulary was in the main that of the age of Chaucer, although some more words had been borrowed from French and Latin.

4. FROM THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY TO THE PRESENT DAY.

223. In most respects the sixteenth century was profoundly significant for modern English. Under the Tudor sovereigns England was subjected to several influences: the maritime discoveries of Da Gama, Columbus, and Magellan; the revival of classical learning; the Protestant Reformation. The effect of these influences upon English character is indicated in § 175. The effect upon the vocabulary was no less marked. Words were introduced from the Spanish and Portuguese, also—through these languages—from the Orient and from the Indian dialects of North and South America. Italian terms of art and literature were introduced, and many French terms, either on their own merits or by reason of the active part played by France in transmitting the results of the revival of classical learning from the Continent to England. Also some High German words came in through the association of English with German Protestants. In the drama of the immediate successors of Shakespeare, under James I., the language had already acquired that polyglot vocabulary which was to be henceforth its characteristic.

Further, the religious disputes, first between Catholics and Protestants, afterward between Anglicans and Puritans, together with the widespread use of the Prayer Book and English translations of the Bible, swelled the

current vocabulary with many theological terms of Greek and Latin origin.

224. From the middle of the seventeenth century to the end of the eighteenth, the language was again subjected to strong French influences. For France, under Louis XIV., had taken the lead and set the fashion; and, although England was engaged in a desperate struggle with France for the mastery of the seas, a struggle which ended only with the conquest of Canada and India, Englishmen of letters were under the spell of the Court of Versailles. This period of our literature, conveniently designated the Dryden-Pope era, has an evident French vein of thought and diction.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries many words have been introduced from the colonies, *i. e.*, from India, the Cape of Good Hope, and Australia; not to speak of borrowings from the Spanish, Dutch, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Malay, and the native languages of America, in short, from all the peoples with whom the Anglo-American race has had commercial dealings.

There is still another class of foreign words, very numerous and important, namely, the terms of science. Under science is here included every study which aims at exact knowledge. Usually these scientific terms are of Greek or Latin formation; some were used by the Greeks and Romans, but most of them are of modern coinage. In mathematics we have such terms as *binomial*, *differential*, *integral*, etc.; in biology, *systole*, *diastole*, *oviposit*, etc.; in geology, *eocene*, *pliocene*, *troglodyte*, etc.; in chemistry, *oxygen*, *hydrogen*, *ethyl*, *methyl*, etc.; in theology, *unitarian*, *trinitarian*, *hagiology*, and hundreds more in *-ology*; in philosophy, *conceptualism*, *determinism*, *atavism*, etc. It would be useless to multiply examples. These terms of science are already to be counted by the tens of thousands, and the number is constantly increasing. Each new discovery gives rise to a nomenclature of its own.

5. AMERICAN ENGLISH.

225. The English language was brought to this country by the first colonists from England, in the sixteenth century. But the determining period of colonization was the seventeenth, although the number of colonists was largely increased in the eighteenth. Until the War of Independence this country was a group of colonies, and its language and its literature were distinctively colonial. With the establishment of the United States, however, the colonial period ended and a distinctively American period began.

At the present day there is a perceptible difference, not only of pronunciation, but of diction, between the English of the educated classes in America and the English of the corresponding classes in England.

The difference in pronunciation is described with sufficient accuracy by phoneticians. Only a few general points can be mentioned here. In general, the Englishman speaks more rapidly than the American, and is much given to ending sentences with the rising instead of the falling inflection. He suppresses the *r* freely, also the *h* sound in the *wh*-compound, confounding *Wales* and *whales*. This is quite distinct from the vulgar Cockney 'ouse (for *house*) or *h'ice* (for *ice*). He pronounces the *a* broadly, especially in such words as *hålf*, *dånce*, and ends many long vowels with an audible "glide." Thus the English pronunciation of *pound* suggests to an American ear something like *pou-und*. Even many of the short vowels have this glide. To sum up, the pronunciation of England offers a greater variety of vowel-sound. On the other hand, the vowels are freer from the nasal twang which is apt to disfigure American utterance.

The difference of diction is less easily summed up. A few specimens of parallel words are given in § 98. But a mere word-list, even were it exhaustive, would not state the case adequately. The idiomatic and rhetorical employment of words must also be taken into account. Here is

the weak side of American English. We do not, as a nation, speak and write with due observance of grammatical propriety. We are too tolerant of vulgarisms and poor grammar.

Yet even here it is necessary to discriminate. The *uneducated* speak badly in every land. The uneducated Englishman is fully as crude as his American cousin. The opposite extreme, the *highly educated*, speak and write about equally well everywhere. The problem for America lies rather with the *half-educated*, with those persons who have had some education, but not of the highest order. In America such persons play a more active part in public life than they do in England and other old countries. They write and print more, and are quite heedless of form. They are satisfied with any collocation of words that expresses the meaning approximately.

226. The faults of this kind of writing are justly condemned as "Americanisms." To remedy them is the problem of the present and the future. The solution of the problem lies in the establishment of a thorough, carefully graded course of reading and composition for all scholars between the ages of ten and eighteen. Reverting to §§ 142, 143, we may hold that it is the prime duty of the American school-system to impart to every boy and girl both a taste for good reading and the gift of correct, easy, and refined expression.

But it is not our duty to attempt to conform our expression in every feature to London English of the present day. Such an attempt would be impossible. Through the operation of social and political forces which cannot now be undone, correct London English and correct American English have so far diverged as to run parallel courses. The language established here in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has retained words, or shades of meaning, and idioms which are no longer in vogue in England. These words and idioms are sanctioned by the usage of

our best poets and prose-writers. Our literature, in fact, is like our law. Each was transplanted from the mother country, but each enjoys now an independent growth. Within the past century we have acquired a reputable literary tradition of our own. To tamper with this tradition would be worse than useless. Although the great writers of England, past and future, will always be the object of our most earnest study, we are not constrained to follow them blindly.

6. GENERAL REMARKS.

227. The total number of words to be found in English literature (non-dialectic) of all grades since the year 1100 has been computed at over 200,000. Of this vast number, however, many are obsolete or obsolescent, and many more are technical terms used only in certain trades or professions. The number of words which a diligent reader would meet with in a very promiscuous course of reading cannot be computed, but we might guess it to be 40,000, possibly 50,000. Whether a reader of not more than ordinary training would really understand 40,000 words is doubtful. One's understanding and appreciation of words depends in great part upon one's general training and home-surroundings. In this respect the children of cultured reading families have decidedly the advantage.

The vocabulary which one uses in one's own writing is much smaller than the vocabulary needed for reading. Few, among the great writers, have used 10,000 words. An ordinary professional writer may content himself with from 5000 to 6000. The ordinary writer will find 3000 to 4000 a sufficient allowance.

228. Some suggestions for acquiring a working vocabulary are offered in §§ 79, 80. To them may be added the following.

1. *Try, systematically and persistently, to enrich your vocabulary.* When, in your reading, you meet with a word or a

phrase which strikes you as at once novel and serviceable, note it down. Make sure of its exact meaning, and then try to introduce it in your own writing. This effort to use the diction of a good author is helpful in two ways. It augments your resources of expression, it also develops your mental faculties, *it trains you to think* in sympathy with one maturer than yourself. Consider that words are not mere algebraic symbols of thought; they are living organisms, to be studied only in their natural surroundings.

2. Do not let yourself be misled into favoring one set or kind of words more than another. Sixty years and more ago, Lord Brougham, addressing the students of the University of Glasgow, laid down the rule that the native (Anglo-Saxon) part of our vocabulary was to be favored at the expense of that other part which has come from the Latin and Greek. The rule was an impossible one, and Lord Brougham himself never tried seriously to observe it; nor, in truth, has any great writer made the attempt. Not only is our language highly composite, but the component words have, in De Quincey's phrase, "happily coalesced." It is easy to jest at words in *-osity* and *-ation*, at "dictionary" words, and the like. But even Lord Brougham would have found it difficult to dispense with *pomposity* and *imagination*.*

Our criterion for selecting a word should not be its origin but its *function*. Words of native origin are usually terms for familiar objects and qualities and for direct, strong action. Our longer Anglo-French and Greek-Latin words are usually terms for expressing delicate discriminations and abstract thinking. Both sets are indispensable, and therefore both are used freely by all truly skilful writers. Thus Shakespeare makes the headstrong Cassius speak in the purest native monosyllables:

* See De Quincey (Autobiography), ii. 65-70; also Matthew Arnold, *On Translating Homer*, 288, 289.

I had as lief not be as live to be
In awe* of such a thing as I myself.

—*Julius Caesar*, i. 2. 95.

Yet the same Shakespeare intuitively puts into the mouth of a more imaginative character such diction as :

This my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine.

—*Macbeth*, ii. 2. 62.

Attention is called in § 6 to the two classes of words in the extract from De Quincey's *Confessions*. The longer extract from the *Mail Coach*, § 31, also illustrates the difference aptly.

3. Consider that a rich and pure vocabulary is a badge of culture. Our words do not suggest at once their meanings, as German words usually do, by the mere formation. They demand more study and comparison, a wider range of reading, a keener insight into idiom. This is the difficult side of our language. Unlike our grammar, which is the simplest of all grammars, our vocabulary is puzzling, even to the native. The mastery of it is the test of culture. While the German may take the fine distinction between dative and accusative for his test, or the Frenchman may take the subjunctive mood for his, the Anglo-American will judge his fellows by their words and phrases.

* *Awe* happens to be a Danish word, see § 216; but Shakespeare was certainly unaware of its origin, and we, too, should be, but for our philology.

SUPPLEMENT I.

FORMS IN LETTER-WRITING.

[See § 161.]

1. HEADING IN GENERAL.

229. THE term heading is convenient; it denotes the matter put at the *head*, or top of the first page.

In a formal letter the heading consists of three parts:

1. The heading proper, *i. e.*, the residence of the writer, or the place to which he wishes the answer to be sent.

2. The date, or time of writing.

3. The designation of the recipient of the letter.

The following is a specimen of the general heading of a letter to a business firm:

Ithaca, New York,
March 3, 1895.

Eldredge & Bro.,
Philadelphia, Penna.,
*Gentlemen,**

The following is to an individual, not to a firm:

New Haven, Conn.,
Sept. 6, 1895.

Prest. J. G. Schurman, D. Sc., LL.D.,
Cornell University,
Dear Sir,

If the writer lives in a *large city*, he should state his place of residence, or his office, exactly. Thus:

* Some writers punctuate here with a :—

*99 Broadway, Room 72,
New York, Aug. 5, 1895.*

In like manner the post-office of a small town or village should be stated exactly. Thus :

*Bursonville, Bucks Co., Penna.,
March 26, 1895.*

The object of the heading proper is to instruct the recipient of the letter how to direct his answer. Consequently, when the writer and the recipient are in regular correspondence, the heading proper is frequently, perhaps usually, omitted. But business firms and many private individuals use paper on which the residence, or office address, is printed.

The exact date, *i. e.*, day, month, year, is always desirable, even in the most familiar correspondence ; in business correspondence it is indispensable. The use of figures instead of month-names, *c. g.*, 6/2/1894 = June 2, 1894, is not desirable, even in a letter to a business firm. No one likes to be forced to reconstruct from memory the fact that the sixth month is June.

The designation of the recipient of the letter varies according to the nature of the correspondence. It ranges from extreme formality to extreme familiarity. The first two specimens given above are formal. To them may be added the following :

*William D. Gray, Esq.,
Dear Sir,*

*Mr. William D. Gray,
Dear Sir,*

For the use of *Esq.* and *Mr.*, see § 231.

*Mrs. William Thompson,
Dear Madam,*

*Mrs. Helen Thompson,
Dear Madam,*

For the distinction between *Mrs. William* and *Mrs. Helen*, see § 231.

Less formal are the following :

My dear Mr. Gray,

• *My dear Mrs. Thompson,*

My dear Miss White,

My dear Sir, *My dear Madam*, are perhaps less used at present than *Dear Sir*, *Dear Madam*. But in the last three forms given above the omission of *My* would suggest a shade more of intimacy, if the correspondents are of opposite sexes. Thus, a letter from a gentleman, beginning, *Dear Miss White*, or one from a lady, beginning, *Dear Mr. Gray*, suggests that the writer and the recipient are on familiar terms of acquaintance.

Between relatives, and between friends who call each other by the first name, the *My* is retained or dropped at the pleasure of the writer. There is no difference between *My dear Father*, *My dear Jack*, *My dear Fanny*, and *Dear Father*, *Dear Jack*, *Dear Fanny*.

In very intimate correspondence pet names and nicknames are used. There can be no objection to the use of them in moderation ; but attention is called again to the caution given in § 161.

2. SIGNATURE.

230. This includes both the signature proper, *i. e.* the name of the writer, and the formal clause or clauses inserted between the body of the letter and the writer's name. Thus :

I have the honor to remain,

Your obedient servant,

William D. Gray.

Yours very respectfully,

John Thompson.

Yours very truly,

(Miss) Helen Montague.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Montague.

The form, *Your humble servant*, is out of date. *Your obedient servant* seems to be the limit of modern deference. *Yours very truly* is the form most in use. *Yours sincerely* is not a mark of intimacy, but it suggests at least a moderate degree of acquaintance and mutual personal esteem.

Between relatives and between very intimate friends almost every form of ending is permissible, as :

Yours affectionately,

Jack.

Your loving mother.

Yours as ever,

K.

In a letter to a stranger, especially if the letter is the opening one of the correspondence, the name of the writer should be written as legibly as possible. And if the writer is a lady, she should sign herself *Mrs.* or *Miss*, as the case may be.

It is impossible to lay too much stress upon the legibility of the signature. Most of us are given to twisting the letters of our names out of their normal shapes and sizes. As long as we are writing to persons who are accustomed to the signature, we do no harm. But the writer who submits a Chinese puzzle of this kind to a stranger does not deserve an answer.

3. ENVELOPE-ADDRESS.

231. However intimate the relations between the writer and the recipient, the address on the envelope should always be formal and precise. (See § 161.)

Firm and corporation names should be in official form. Thus :

Stamp.	<p><i>G. P. Putnam's Sons</i></p> <p><i>27 West 23d Street</i></p> <p><i>New York City*</i></p>
--------	---

* *New York City* (in one line) is gradually taking the place of *New York, New York* (or *N. Y.*), in two lines.

Stamp.	<p><i>The Farmers' & Mechanics' National Bank,</i> <i>Philadelphia,</i> <i>Penna.</i></p>
--------	---

Stamp.	<p><i>Houghton, Mifflin & Co.,</i> <i>Boston,</i> <i>Massachusetts.</i></p>
--------	---

Observe the slight difference of punctuation in the above. In the first specimen there is no comma or period at the line-ends. This is also the latest manner of printing the title-page of a book, the present book for instance. The difference is one of taste. All that can be demanded of a writer is that he be consistent; he must punctuate all the line-ends, or none. But in either case abbreviations (see § 129), take a period, as in *Co.* above. *Harper & Brothers* is more elegant, certainly, than *Harper & Bros.*, but it is not obligatory. *Co.* is an abbreviation for *Company* and for *County*; but the two uses are not likely to cause confusion.

On the other hand, the American fashion of abbreviating state-names is neither elegant nor prudent. In careless writing *N. Y.* is easily confounded with *N. C.* and with *N. J.* (There is a city of Trenton in *N. Y.* and *N. J.*, and between the two cities many letters annually go astray.) *Mass.* and *Miss.*, *Ia.* and *Ind.*, are easily confounded; so also *La.*, *Va.*, *Pa.** Ordinary handwriting, we

* During the excitement of "John Brown's Raid," 1859, Governor Wise of Virginia wrote an important letter to Governor Curtin of Pennsylvania. The letter was addressed to *Harrisburg, Pa.*, but the Virginia postmaster sent it by mistake to *Harris[on]burg, Va.*; before the mistake was discovered, the rapid march of events had rendered the letter useless.

must remember, is usually rapid and frequently careless. Hence the writer should guard against every possibility of error, by giving the state-name in full. The only current abbreviations that seem to be safe are *Penna.*, *Conn.*, and *D. C.*

The house or office should be designated unmistakably. The specimens given under *Headings*, § 229, will suffice :

*99 Broadway, Room 72,
New York City.

Bursonville,
Bucks Co.,
Pennsylvania.*

Should the address be to *William D. Gray, Esq.*, or to *Mr. William D. Gray*? In the early part of this century *Mr.* was in common use. Later, it was replaced by *Esq.* But at present there is a widespread disposition to use *Mr.* again. In one respect it is preferable; it corresponds more nearly to our actual speech. No one would ever *speak* the formula: *William D. Gray, Esq.*

The difference between *Mrs. William Thompson* and *Mrs. Helen Thompson* is one of etiquette. A married woman whose husband is living is properly addressed by the name of her husband, *e. g.*, *Mrs. William Thompson*. If the husband is dead, the female name is permissible; though some widows prefer the retention of the husband's name.

In addressing a letter to an unmarried lady the strict etiquette is to use merely *Miss*, *e. g.*, *Miss Montague*, if she is the only daughter, or the eldest unmarried daughter. Intimate friends, however, frequently write the full name, *e. g.*, *Miss Lucy Montague*. But younger unmarried daughters are always addressed by the full name, *e. g.*, *Miss Helen Montague*, *Miss Emma Montague*, etc.

In the envelope-address *Professor* is frequently, perhaps usually, abbreviated to *Prof.*, but the proper form in writing to a doctor of medicine is *John Chapman, M. D.* In any case do not begin the heading (§ 229) of your letter: *Dear Prof.*; *Dear Doc.* The phrases have an unmistakable flavor of vulgarity. Begin: *My dear Professor*, *My dear Doctor*.

Clergymen are addressed in the following form: *Rev. Isaac Taylor (D. D., LL.D.)*.

4. INVITATIONS, ACCEPTANCES, REGRETS.

232. Writings of this nature, passing between friends and relatives, do not differ from ordinary letters.

But the more formal notes which pass between mere acquaintances require the observance of certain forms. The following specimens will be sufficient for ordinary cases.

Mrs. Gray requests the pleasure of Mr. Hunt's company at dinner on Saturday next, at seven o'clock.

*The Cedars,
October (the) fourth.*

An invitation coming thus from the hostess implies a dinner at which the guests will be both ladies and gentlemen. An invitation to a so-called "stag" dinner would run in the name of the host: *Mr. Gray requests, etc.*

Mrs. Gray requests the pleasure of Mrs. Hunt's company at luncheon on Tuesday, the sixteenth, at one o'clock.

The above suggests a gathering of ladies.
Acceptances may be worded thus:

Mr. Hunt accepts with pleasure Mrs. Gray's invitation for Saturday next.

*The Albemarle,
October (the) fifth.*

Regrets may be worded thus:

Mr. Hunt regrets that a previous engagement prevents him from accepting Mrs. Gray's kind invitation for Tuesday next.

Mr. Hunt regrets that his expected absence from town on Tuesday next prevents him from accepting Mrs. Gray's kind invitation for that day.

Certain points are to be noted in the above forms.

1. The address of the writer is put below the body of the note, and not at the head of the page.
2. It is customary to mention only the day and the month, not the year.
3. The fastidious avoid the use of abbreviations and figures. Thus, "luncheon," not "lunch"; "seven," not "7." And the ultra-fastidious prefer "October the fourth" to "October fourth."

SUPPLEMENT II.

WORKS TO BE CONSULTED.

THE teacher of English composition should not be tied down to one text-book alone, but should get as much help as possible from collateral reading. The following works, which have been carefully consulted by the present writer, are herewith recommended.

1. F. N. Scott and J. V. Denney, *Paragraph-Writing*. Boston; Allyn and Bacon, 1893.

For nearly ten years the subject of instruction in paragraph-writing has been prominent in the thoughts of many educators. The first to formulate the subject at all was Alexander Bain, in his *English Composition and Rhetoric*, Part I., ch. 5. Here we find, in outline at least, the unity and sequence of the paragraph inculcated (Bain's term for designating sequence is "consecutive"), also the value of connectives. Genung, in his *Practical Elements of Rhetoric*. Boston; Ginn, 1890, pp. 193-213, treated the subject more systematically than Bain had done. Also Wendell, in his *English Composition*, 1893, laid great stress upon the function of the paragraph. But it is to Scott and Denney that credit is due for first treating the paragraph with adequate care, fulness, and method. Practically they have exhausted the subject, so much so that every subsequent writer will find it difficult to avoid copying their classification and nomenclature. Yet their book, by reason of its fulness and attention to minutiae, is better adapted for teachers and advanced college-classes than for ordinary college and high-school students. Too much stress, perhaps, is laid upon fine distinctions and subdivisions. Nevertheless, the book is one which every teacher and professional writer can use with great profit.

2. Barrett Wendell, *English Composition*. New York; Scribner, 1893. This book is of an altogether different cast. The author does not profess to reduce the subject to a formal system. He is stimulating rather than didactic; he initiates his readers into the

spirit of good writing. His temper is distinctively literary ; his illustrations evince, not only wide reading, but excellent taste. The book brushes aside more than one delusion and exploded tradition ; among its many positive merits, it inspires in the mature reader the desire to write well. But it is scarcely a book for the young ; it presupposes too great familiarity with general literature.

3. J. F. Genung, *Outlines of Rhetoric*. Boston ; Ginn, 1893.
A. S. Hill, *The Foundations of Rhetoric*. New York ; Harpers, 1893.

These two books are best discussed together. Although differing in outward arrangement, they agree in aim and are addressed to the same grade of scholar, namely, to the lower classes in the high school, or to scholars still younger. Each book teaches a moderate amount of practical grammar. But in each the stress is laid upon the choice and use of words, and upon sentence-structure. Each leads up to and a little way into paragraph-writing. Each offers specimens of faulty English for correction. The two books, in short, are parallel at nearly every point. They put into the hands of the teacher the means of weeding out the usual vices of expression and securing correctness within the sentence. Every teacher can well afford to consult both books.



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